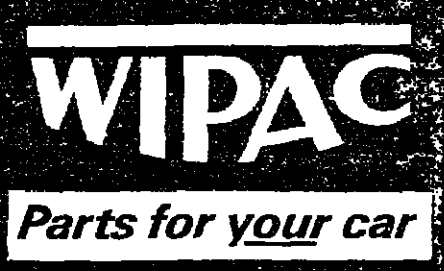


FINANCIAL TIMES



No. 29,793 Saturday November 30 1985 UK 35p U.S.A. \$1.00 Canada C\$1.00 Bermuda \$1.50

WORLD NEWS

Seychelles exile killed in London

Exiled Seychelles resistance leader Gerard Hoareau was shot dead outside his London home yesterday.

Anti-terrorist squad detectives are looking for a man seen opposite his Edgware house.

Other right-wing exiles, including deposed President Sir James Mancham, accused the islands' leader, Albert Rene, of being behind the killing. Seychelles officials in London denied the claim.

Mr Hoareau came to England four years ago after a jail term for distributing anti-government literature.

Glasgow family killed by gas explosion

Five people died when an explosion, followed by a fire, devastated a block of four flats in Glasgow. A family of four, including a baby, were among the dead. Investigators found a fractured four-inch gas main nearby.

Japanese rail attacks

Left-wing guerrillas were accused for attacks of arson and sabotage against Japanese railways in Tokyo and Osaka. Page 3

Egypt on alert

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Abdel-Maguid said security on the Libyan border had been stepped up, but denied Libyan claims that Cairo was planning an attack. Page 3

Israel apologises

Israel apologised to the US over the case of an American Jew accused of selling military secrets to Israel. Page 3

Tit-for-tat expulsions

Ghana expelled four US diplomats for spying. Washington ordered out four Ghana embassy staff in reply. Page 2

Liverpool plays for time

Liverpool City Council approved a solution to the city's financial crisis which will leave its capital resources severely depleted in two years. Page 4

Elton John 'wins' £5m

Singer Elton John and songwriter Bernie Taupin hope to receive £5m in unpaid royalties after winning a High Court case. Defendant Dick James Music said it would be less.

Owen urges referendum

SDP leader Dr David Owen called for a referendum on proportional representation, saying most people supported it. Page 4

S. Africa security move

South Africa is to step up border security by replacing police units with soldiers, following recent attacks. Page 3

Journalists held

Liberia said several journalists, including BBC correspondent Isaac Bantu, were being held after this month's failed coup.

IXL chief loses licence

John Elliott, chairman of Australian brewery group Elders IXL, which has bid for Allied-Lyons of the UK, lost his licence for six months in Melbourne for drunken driving.

Botham at Land's End

Cricketer Ian Botham completed his John O'Grady's Land's End walk, raising £400,000 for leukaemia research. He will walk through London on Monday to try to attract business donations.

Financial Times

The UK price of the Financial Times goes up on Monday from 35p to 40p. This is the first rise since August 1983.

MARKETS

DOLLAR	
New York:	
DM 2.515	
FFr 2.6725	
Sfr 2.084	
Y202.4	
London:	
DM 2.511 (2.508)	
FFr 2.6675 (2.72)	
Sfr 2.081 (2.088)	
Y202.1 (201.5)	
Dollar index 126.3 (126.5)	
Tokyo close Y202.05	
US CLOSING RATES	
Feed Funds 7.4%	
3-month Treasury Bills: yield 7.38%	
Long Bond 100% yield 9.35%	
GOLD	
New York: Comex Dec	
\$322.9	
London: \$325.0 (\$326.5)	
Chief price changes yesterday. Back Page	

BUSINESS SUMMARY

Sinclair to seek £10m after loss

SINCLAIR RESEARCH, the troubled home computer group, is seeking £10m in external finance after a pre-tax loss of £18.3m in the year to March. A profit of £14.3m was made in the previous year.

Sir Clive Sinclair, founder and chairman, said the money was needed to provide working capital and fund product launches next year. Back Page; Background Page 4

TOKYO Stock Exchange is to admit six overseas investment banks and securities houses, including Vickers, de Costa and S. G. Warburg of the UK, as members. They will become the first foreign members in a 10-seat expansion which includes four Japanese firms. Page 11; Lex; Back Page

TAKEOVER speculation brought a volatile week in London equities to a firm close, with interest focused on the stores

sector. The FT Ordinary Share Index recouped an early fall to finish 9.9 up at 1,142.9, four points short of Monday's record 1,146.9. Page 14

SINGAPORE faces the prospect of the first collapse of a public company following failure to agree on a rescue package for Pan-Electric Industries. Greater government regulation of the stock market is expected as a result of the crisis. Back Page

US money supply M1 rose \$2.8bn to \$816bn in the week to November 18.

GOVERNMENT has decided in favour of one supervisory body, rather than two, to regulate City financial markets. Page 4

FRANCE pushed up to the limits of the EEC clampdown on steel subsidies with a two-year FFR20bn (£1.75bn) aid programme for its producers. Back Page

ITALIAN Government is prepared to give financial backing to the country's helicopter manufacturer, Agusta, to take a stake in Westland of the UK. Back Page

BERLEY (UK), lingerie producer, which has its factories in Wales, called in a receiver when County Bank, a main shareholder, requested immediate repayment of a £565,000 loan. Page 1

CANNON GROUP, Los Angeles-based owner of Classic cinema chain, and Gerald Ronson's privately-owned Heron International made a joint bid worth nearly £110m for Thorn EMI's screen entertainment arm. Page 10; Lex; Back Page

AKZO, Dutch chemicals concern, claimed victory in its £14m bid for British paint maker Blundell-Pergo after facing a late challenge from Reed International. Page 10

MATTHEW BROWN, Blackburn-based brewer facing a hostile £126m takeover offer from Scottish & Newcastle Breweries, reported a 16 per cent rise in full-year taxable profits to £8.2m. Page 10; Lex; Back Page

CITY of London bankers are to sell Bond Aid certificates in the financial community on behalf of an appeal intended to raise millions of dollars for the Save the Children Fund. Page 4

Britain's bright young things find industry so boring

BRITAIN'S bright young people do not like industry enough for its own long-term good. They especially do not like packaging, and bread and cake making is not much more popular, writes John Lloyd, Industrial Editor.

These and other disturbing findings are revealed in a two-volume survey, *Attracting the Brightest Students into Industry*, commissioned from Opinion Research and Communication by the Committee for Research into Public Attitudes. A panel of distinguished industrial figures met at the Savoy Hotel yesterday to demonstrate their concern about the survey's findings, and their concern to change opinions.

The survey found that many of them had long thought, that there is, as Sir Geoffrey Chandler, a former director general of the National Economic Development Office, put it, a "uniquely anti-industrial culture in the world's first industrial nation." Sir Geoffrey is charged with making next year's Industry Year.

Lord Plowden, chairman of the research committee and a man whose devotion to industry in public service and private business has spanned much of his 77 years, said that "after the 1850s, people seemed to turn away from industry as something not quite nice—something they did if they couldn't get anything better to do."

"We alone of the great industrial societies have that attitude to that part of society which produces much of the wealth on which every other part of society depends."

The survey showed that children were visited at their schools by bankers, Army officers and policemen but not by the key people in industry. When industry did come to them, it was usually in the form of the top people (like those in the Savoy yesterday) who were of less interest to them than those who did jobs more within their grasp.

Mr John Garnett, director of the Industrial Society, said that the anti-industrial culture was rife at every level of the educational system. Lecturing at Sussex University, he had been told by students that they were not interested in materialism: "Take off your denim jeans and say that," he roared at them; adding, to clinch his argument, that "if Wales had not poured all this concrete into the Channel Tunnel, industry no magnet for the young. Page 6

Denmark poses threat to EEC reforms

BY HILARY BARNES IN COPENHAGEN AND QUENTIN PEEL IN BRUSSELS

THE DANISH Government's lack of a sure majority in its Parliament emerged yesterday as a serious obstacle to any agreement at next week's EEC summit on major reforms to the Treaty of Rome.

At the end of a three-hour meeting of the Folketing's Common Market affairs committee, it seemed that Mr Poul Schluter, the Prime Minister, would face a parliamentary crisis for his minority administration if he agreed to any significant reforms of the EEC treaties at the Luxembourg gathering next Monday and Tuesday.

Dollar's decline boosts D-Mark

BY ALEXANDER NICOLL AND PHILIP STEPHENS

THE dollar's slide on the foreign exchange markets pushed the D-Mark to a 21 year high in Europe yesterday. It helped the pound rise to its highest level on a trade-weighted basis for two months.

The US currency, which dropped sharply after a September agreement by leading industrialised countries on intervention to reduce its value, has been falling more recently without official intervention as markets have focused on the outlook for slower US economic growth and lower interest rates.

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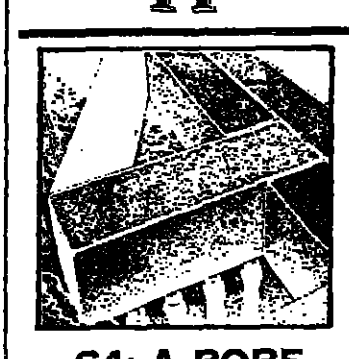
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WEEKEND FT



C4: A BORE NO MORE

In the beginning most viewers found Channel Four a bore. Three years on, the Channel Shore image has gone. Godfrey Hodgson explains why. Page 1



SAVINGS

Ten years of tax-free saving are about to bear fruit for thousands of investors. Page 5



DIVERSIONS

Come wind, come weather, come wonderful fashions in big coats this winter. Page XVII



ARTS

Traditional Japanese culture — how it survives in modern Japan. On exhibition at the Barbican, London. Page XIX

An invitation to any investor with £35,000 or more

The Directors of Vanbrugh Life Assurance and the Investment Managers of the Prudential Group invite you to discover the full range of advantages offered to substantial investors through their VIP service.

R.S.V.P.

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City braced for two big bids

BY LIONEL BARBER AND DAVID GOODHART

THE CITY is braced this week-end for the announcement on Monday of two of the UK's largest takeover bids—a hostile £1.5bn move by Argyl, the supermarket group, for Distillers, the Scotch whisky combine, and an agreed £1bn bid from the Imperial Group for United Biscuits, Imperial and UB are two of Britain's largest consumer products companies.

Market analysts said they expected Imperial, with pre-tax profits of £220m on sales of £4.59bn in the year ended October 1984 to launch an agreed bid for United Biscuits which had pre-tax profits of £87.2m on sales of £1.74bn in 1984. There was speculation in the stock market that the terms would be about £3 in Imperial shares.

United Biscuits, would become the new group chief executive. The two companies and their financial advisers were holding meetings last night which looked set to continue over the weekend.

The shares of both the planned partners were active yesterday, with Imperial closing 6p up at 244p and United Biscuits down 1p at 278p. There was particularly strong movement in Imperial's traded options, according to several brokers.

Argyl Group board, led by Mr James Gulliver, is meeting this morning to discuss whether to proceed with a bid and, if so, on what terms. Though Argyl sought last week to dampen speculation that it would move, few, including the Distillers board, expect Mr Gulliver to stay his hand. "We are 99 per cent sure he will make a bid," said

One of Distillers' advisers. Under a ruling agreed with the Takeover Panel three months ago, following a bid of Argyl's bid there was to be the first day the supermarket group can launch a takeover attempt.

Shares in Distillers were also active yesterday, at one point rising 5p to 515p, though they closed unchanged at 510p.

Both Argyl and Distillers have spent the past fortnight briefing City analysts and fund managers in anticipation of a bid battle. Argyl, while refusing to comment publicly on its intentions, let it be known that it would not be prepared to make a bid on Monday if the share price had risen too sharply at the end of this week.

City analysts last week interpreted this as an attempt to depress the Distillers share price, which has risen steadily from 320p in early August.

Details of allocations, Page 10

Private health care: fading boom

Man in the news: Ian Paisley

Editorial comment: fumbling the growth torch

Animals in the lab: an industry besieged

Sir Terence Courran: some questions of style and substance

Appointments	6	Leader Page	8	SE Dealings	14, 15	Unit Trusts	
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OVERSEAS NEWS

Swedish court boost for curbs on smoking

By Kevin Done, Nordic Editor, in Stockholm

ANTI-SMOKING campaigners have been given powerful new ammunition by the decision of Sweden's Insurance High Court to accept that passive smoking can cause lung cancer and can be classified as a cause of industrial injury.

The verdict has already led to renewed calls in Sweden for a ban on smoking in the workplace.

It has provided fresh grounds for non-smokers to refuse to accept jobs where they are exposed to cigarette smoke and Sweden's Factory Inspectorate is expecting a flood of complaints about unacceptable working environments.

For 13 years a Swedish woman worked in the drawing office of a Gothenburg engineering company. She was a non-smoker, but in 1980 she developed a form of lung cancer normally only found among smokers.

The woman claimed the illness was a form of industrial injury caused by the many years of passive smoking in an office where the majority of her colleagues were smokers.

Under Swedish social insurance rules a worker can claim a full wage as compensation for industrial injury, whereas sick pay amounts to only 90 per cent of his normal wage.

The regional social insurance offices in Gothenburg refused the woman's claim for industrial injury benefit, but her claim has now been upheld by the final court of appeal.

The court dismissed claims from the Swedish Social Insurance Board to the effect that the connection between lung cancer and passive smoking had not been scientifically proved. The court said it was sufficient that "probable causes" had been established.

According to the court the woman had been exposed to cigarette smoke for 21,000 hours at her workplace. Protests at the time to the management, her trade union and colleagues had little effect. The woman died in 1982, and the office itself has since imposed its own voluntary smoking ban.

A new investigation by Sweden's monopoly Tobacco Company and the Employee Protection Board shows that examination of a person's saliva is sufficient to show the density of smoke in the workplace.

Quentin Peel listens to the Commission's President give his views ahead of next week's EEC summit

Britain becoming more European says Delors



Mr Jacques Delors: "Europe is not built in two days."

STILL BRISTLING from a savage attack by Mr Nigel Lawson, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Jacques Delors, President of the European Commission, believes that the most positive development from the whole exercise to reform the EEC is nonetheless that "Britain is becoming more European."

His surprise conclusion from the three-month-long effort to revise the Treaty of Rome—an operation to which Mrs Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, was strongly opposed—was given in an eve-of-summit interview in Brussels.

But Mr Delors, the former French Finance Minister, is pessimistic about the ultimate outcome of the EEC summit next Monday and Tuesday and the importance of the reform package which could emerge.

He also remains deeply offended by Mr Lawson's attack on his proposals to include monetary reform in the package.

The Commission President, one of the prime contributors to the work of the inter-governmental conference, still believes that the EEC leaders could produce some agreed reform from the summit, but the package will be very modest.

"Europe is not built in two

days, I agree," he said. "But at least we must make a qualitative leap forward. That is what politics is about. People who say: 'We are not in a hurry,' are people who don't want to do anything."

Mr Delors insisted that the Commission had not deliberately adopted a maximalist position, in order to force through substantial changes, but had sought to be modest from the outcome.

"We did not go for 100 per cent in order to achieve 50. We went for 50 per cent from the start. It looks as if we may only achieve 25 per cent," he said.

His gravest disappointments in the package are likely to be on technology—the text is a mess—and the exclusion of monetary questions at the insistence of Britain and West Germany.

He also fears that the whole host of national exclusions sought by the member-states on measures to speed up liberalisation of the internal market could abort the exercise.

However, in spite of the UK Government's continuing reservation on the whole exercise, he praised the British attitude.

"The British are becoming more and more European," he said. "It may still take them 40 years to get there, but you can

no longer say that the British idea of Europe is the contrary to what the rest of us want. You used to be able to say that."

He spelt out his views on a range of issues:

• The Milan summit decision to reform the Treaty: "Perhaps it was a mistake. It certainly disappointed Mrs Thatcher. It

is true that the state of mind (of the member states) is not ripe. Mrs Thatcher had prepared everything. She had made concessions. Then the unpredictable happened. That is why she was so annoyed."

• The minimum desirable outcome: "We need the political and economic conditions to re-launch Europe. Completion

of the single, large market would be a considerable stimulant. But an effort by each country is required. It cannot be done without a monetary dimension, either."

"We must also get away from this unanimity practice. I honestly believe that without reform of the Treaty (for more majority voting) we cannot make progress."

• Luxembourg compromise: "If they started talking about the Luxembourg compromise, they would not get anywhere. It is a theological debate, between the federalists and the non-federalists. But we need a practical guarantee that the Luxembourg compromise will be less used."

• Monetary affairs: "My proposal was pitiable. It is too serious a quotation on which to try and have a revolution. It is an effort to put into the Treaty what already exists in practice. The text proposed was considered timid by everyone who saw it."

• But the British fell on us. Mr Lawson was literally furious. I have been attacked and insulted by half the German press. I don't know what to do. I am disoriented by it."

• Technology: "The European

companies, like Philips and Siemens, need serious people to talk to. They need to know what is happening. This does not help, because the text is a mess. As it stands, it will give us nothing. The industry needs reasons rather than diplomatic acrobatics."

• His own future in the Commission: "I have every intention of staying here for four years. I am not obsessed with France, and I am not a candidate for the Presidency of France. I must be unique in that I am happy to be here."

"I am very angry (about the outcome of the conference), but my colleagues are calmer than me. Lord Cockfield told me not to leave the field of battle when the first shot was fired."

• Relations with France: "I am not popular with the French Government. Mitterrand says he approves of my monetary paper, but he did not tell me to do it. I will stop talking on January 5 (the beginning of the election campaign) about France."

"Up till then, I have only one thing to say to France: don't be tedious and destroy in two years what it has taken you 10 years to achieve."

EEC attempt to agree emissions standards suffers fresh setback

BY IVO DAWNAY IN BRUSSELS

TORTUOUS negotiations to establish Europe-wide standards on exhaust emissions from cars took three small steps forwards yesterday, and a substantial leap backwards.

After more than 20 hours of talks, EEC environment ministers agreed on a series of detailed points concerning more flexible emissions levels for automatic transmission cars, postponed application of the norms for a new Perkins engine, currently under development, and postponed rules on the introduction of cars capable of running on lead-free petrol.

But a longstanding Danish blockade on the emissions standards agreed by the other nine member states in June remains in place. Furthermore, the Greeks have now added their insistence that Athens will only back the proposals if EEC cash is made available to combat

pollution in the Greek capital. Ministers had hoped to reach final agreement on the new standards before the year-end. It now looks unlikely that any conclusion will be reached before they meet again formally in March.

Denmark remains insistent that the controls due to begin coming in force from 1988 are inadequate. Copenhagen says the Community should adopt more rigorous US requirements and that the timetable for introducing the measures is too relaxed.

However, Commission officials believe that now the outline of minimum requirements is at least accepted by most member states, failure formally to initial the plan should not disrupt the efforts of motor manufacturers to meet the new standards by the proposed deadline.

• An emergency meeting of EEC industry ministers has been called for next Wednesday in a move to increase the pressure on the UK to agree to the US-EEC steel trade pact, negotiated by the European Commission, Quentin Peel reports from Brussels.

The meeting was announced by the EEC Council of Ministers' secretariat, following the US decision to impose new restraints on European steel exports unless the pact is finalised.

Officials in Brussels are nonetheless hopeful that the British reservation on the agreement will be lifted before the meeting, following talks in Washington between the British Steel Corporation and officials from the Office of Mr Clayton Yeutter, the US special trade representative.

Andalucia farm reform plan blocked

By David White in Madrid

THE FIRST stage of a controversial agrarian reform programme in Andalusia has been prevented from taking effect pending an appeal by farm owners.

A court in Seville suspended the enforcement of measures announced by the regional government last month, under which it would take charge of 12 farm estates in the Antequera area north of Malaga and hand over the running of them to co-operatives.

The takeover plan, a compromise effort to accommodate left-wing pressure for far-reaching land reform, will now have to await the outcome of an appeal by the farming and livestock association of Malaga Province.

However, the Socialist regional government said that the setback, which it hoped would be temporary, would not prevent it from taking similar measures against other land holdings in the region.

Decrees affecting parts of Seville and Cordoba Provinces are expected in the next few weeks. The takeovers at Antequera, a predominantly mountainous region, involve almost 6,000 hectares, including an estate belonging to the Marchioness de Cauche, with 44 tenant farmers, and described by a local Communist Party leader as "one of the last feudal bastions of Andalusia." Two of the estates were listed as being "without agricultural use."

Actual ownership of the land remains unchanged. The owners affected are entitled to rent and to return of their farms after 12 years, on condition that they pay for the improvements made in the interim. They will also have to continue paying property tax.

The area has about 7,000 unemployed farm hands. With the reform plan, the amount of work for day labourers is expected to increase by half.

The new co-operatives' performance will be reviewed after five years, and their contracts can be rescinded.

In addition, 44 farms in the same area were ordered to carry out improvements and 27 others subjected to levies for under-use of the land.

University purge

Poland's Communist authorities are reported to have started a long-expected political purge of universities and colleges by sacking over 20 senior academics throughout the country. Reuters reports from Warsaw.

Those removed by the Ministry of Higher Education included Gdansk University rector Karol Taylor and the head of Warsaw Polytechnic, Wladyslaw Findajsa.

Car sales incentives battle looms in US

BY TERRY DODSWORTH IN NEW YORK

A RENEWED car sales incentive battle is looming in the US following a decision by Chrysler, the third largest domestic vehicle manufacturer, to launch a marketing programme offering loans at 6 per cent or \$1,000 (£880) rebates on some models.

Neither General Motors nor Ford, the two larger producers, has so far responded to the Chrysler plan, but analysts expect them both to introduce similar schemes within the next few days.

All three of the American companies have heavy production schedules at present but have been faced in the last two months with a severe decline in sales as imports increased their share of the market from 24 per cent to 30 per cent. In the 10 day sales period of mid-November, shipments of new

American cars fell by 27 per cent against a year ago.

Sales difficulties for US manufacturers were widely predicted following an aggressive two-month spell of low financing or price rebates in August and September. These incentives generated record sales for the US manufacturers, but appear to have pulled forward some purchases that customers were planning later in the year. The incentives also made present prices look exceptionally high, particularly since many models were revamped in October and reintroduced at higher sticker prices.

Economists will be closely monitoring the effect of the Chrysler financing programme as the last round of sales incentives distorted consumer sales figures and US growth statistics.

Insurance industry runs up record claims total

BY OUR NEW YORK STAFF

THE US casualty and property insurance industry has already run up a record total of catastrophe claims this year, with damages running at almost \$2.6bn (£1.85bn) by the end of October, against \$2.25bn for the full 12 months in 1983.

This piling on from natural disasters comes at a time when the insurance industry is experiencing a profits recovery and is therefore in a better position to ride out the problem.

But officials say that the concurrence of storms and aberrant climatic conditions will work its way through into higher rates in the future.

The figures compiled so far do not take account of two disasters this month which will add a significant amount to the total Hurricane Kate, which hit the Gulf states, and a tornado which has torn through

North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Natural disasters are entered into the catastrophe category by the US when estimated claims payments reach \$5m from a specific event.

Behind the jump in the figures this year were two exceptionally damaging hurricanes—Elena and Gloria—and a particularly fierce cold spell back in January.

Elena which hit Florida and adjoining states at the end of August, was reckoned to have caused \$433m worth of claims, and was the fourth most damaging hurricane on record in the US.

Gloria, which slammed into the East Coast of the US and ran its way north in September, leaving a trail of floods and destruction behind in the most populous zone of the country, was the fifth most devastating hurricane, at \$410m.

Ghana expels US envoys

BY PETER BLACKBURN IN ABIDJAN

GHANA has expelled four US diplomats for spying, including the director of the US Information Service in Accra, Ghanaian radio announced yesterday.

The expulsions came shortly after an exchange of spies and indicate continued tension between the two countries, despite a general improvement in relations between Ghana and Western aid donors during the past two years.

Foreign Affairs Secretary, Mr Obed Asamoah, said the diplomats were being expelled for "activities wholly unacceptable and not conducive to good relations between Ghana and the US."

He added that the Government was determined to avoid any recurrence of events that led to the "arbitrary arrest and detention of an innocent

Ghanaian citizen in the US."

This is an apparent reference to the arrest and 20-year imprisonment for spying of Mr Michael Soussoudis, a cousin of Ghanaian head of state, Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings.

At the same time, eight Ghanaian citizens, including a police inspector, were convicted by a Ghanaian public tribunal of spying for the US Central Intelligence Agency.

Earlier this week, the eight Ghanaian citizens were released in exchange for Mr Soussoudis, and it appeared that the affair was closed.

The expulsions are also seen as a warning to the US to respect "an understanding" whereby it should cease all spying activities, as well as the supply of funds to opponents of the Rawlings regime.

Netherlands stands firm on ending N-tests

DUTCH Premier Ruud Lubbers said yesterday that his government would proceed with the scrapping of two tactical nuclear tasks in exchange for deploying 48 cruise missiles despite Nato criticism of the move. AP reports from The Hague.

In a letter to the Dutch Government earlier this week, Nato secretary general Lord Carrington urged the Netherlands not to carry out plans to scrap two of its nuclear assignments, the nuclear capability of the F-16 fighter-bomber and nuclear depth charges.

"We will not change our decision, as was suggested in Lord Carrington's letter," Mr Lubbers said at his weekly press conference.

He noted that in his government's decision to accept deployment of the cruise missiles "both elements, deployment and abolition of the two nuclear tasks, were closely connected."

"We're not intending to disconnect the two," Mr Lubbers said, although his Government's decision on the nuclear tasks would be taken in consultation with Nato allies.

The scrapping of the two nuclear assignments did not mean that the Netherlands had become a second-rate member of the alliance, Mr Lubbers added.

The nuclear tasks reduction plan, which will be formally introduced in the Dutch parliament next week, is seen as an attempt to placate broad segments of the Dutch population opposed to deployment of the cruise missiles.

Defence budget rise

East Germany, obliged to meet the cost of basing Soviet short-range nuclear missiles on its soil, yesterday announced a 7.7 per cent increase in defence spending for 1984. Reuters reports from East Berlin.

Prime Minister Willi Stoph gave the figure at a two-day meeting of the country's parliament, three days after Moscow published an economic plan which said Soviet defence spending would virtually remain at this year's level.

Manila aircraft ban

THE PHILIPPINE Government yesterday banned Australian aircraft from landing at the US military installation Clark Air Base, north of Manila, in retaliation for unfriendly, if not hostile statements made by Australia's Foreign Minister, Mr Ian Hayden, against the Government of President Ferdinand Marcos, Samuel Senores reports.

Aquino verdict soon

The verdict on the murder of Mr Benigno Aquino, the former Philippines opposition leader, is to be finally handed down on Monday by a three-man civilian court after the Philippines Supreme Court lifted an earlier order stopping its promulgation. Samuel Senores reports from Manila.

Ferry strike ends

A FOUR-DAY strike by seamen, which halted all sailings by the Irish state-owned shipping line, B and I, was called off last night, after the company agreed to immediate negotiations on its controversial restructuring plan, writes Hugh Kearney in Dublin.

Arbitrators from the Irish labour court intervened in the dispute on Thursday and the leader of the Seamen's Union of Ireland, Mr William Stacey, agreed to lift the strike after meetings yesterday with B and I chief executive, Mr Alex Spain. The company's ferry services to the UK were expected to resume immediately.

Oil prices raised

MEXICO and Egypt have both announced higher oil prices despite the slide this week in rates on the spot market where the buyer-seller rate for Brent Blend has fallen from \$30.75-30.85 on Monday to \$28.95-29.05 yesterday, Richard Johns reports.

Mexico has raised prices for its Isthmus crude from \$28.90 to \$27.45 for Far East purchasers and from \$26.75 to \$27.60 for Europe.

Egypt is increasing from December 1 its rates by 25 to 60 cents. Its key Suez Blend is going up from \$29.10 to \$26.70 per barrel.

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Brazil alters index to cut record inflation

BY RICHARD FOSTER IN BRASILIA

THE BRAZILIAN Government has changed its basic inflation index, avoiding the need to report a record high monthly rate of 15 per cent. The rate reported for November under the new index was 11.1 per cent.

Richard Foster in Brasilia.

Altering of inflation indexes to lower politically embarrassing figures is not a new practice in Brazil. In 1983, rocketing gasoline prices were purged from an inflation index, being claimed as unrepresentative of real inflation.

For the civilian government of Mr Jose Sarney, the 15 per cent figure would have been painful. Mr Sarney promised in a November 5 nationwide television address that this year's inflation would be lower than last year's. Inflation in 1984 was 232 per cent.

With the 15 per cent figure, inflation for the first 11 months of this year would have been 196.2 per cent compared to 193 per cent last year.

By changing indexes on the day inflation was to be announced, the Government

held accumulated inflation this year to 186.1 per cent.

This kept Mr Sarney's earlier promise intact but opened the government to attacks over its figures. The Brazilian press used ironic headlines to make the move apparent to readers.

In its defence, the Government said it was planning the change for some time. A Finance Ministry spokesman said the new index is broader, more reliable and could in a future month produce a higher, not a lower, reading than the old measure, called the General

Price Index.

Behind the 15 per cent figure are food shortages which have forced emergency imports of corn and other staples. The Finance Minister, Mr Dilson Funaro, said the old index did not reflect lower prices at government auctions of imported corn.

The new index, called the National Consumer Price Index, will be used from now on as the country's only inflation index. It will adjust salaries, savings accounts, rents, Treasury bonds

Government decides one body should regulate City

BY PETER RIDDELL, POLITICAL EDITOR

THE GOVERNMENT has decided in favour of one supervisory body, rather than two, for the regulation of City financial markets.

This is likely to be announced in the middle of December, about the time the Financial Services Bill will set out a new regulatory framework.

Trade and industry ministers, however, will make clear that they have an open mind about the scope of the regulatory regime and possible amendments.

The decision in favour of merging the Securities and Investments Board, responsible for a variety of investments, and Marketing of Investments Board, regulating life assurance, unit trusts and similar pre-packaged investments, was fore-shadowed at the Conservative Party conference and is in line with the opinion of many City organisations as well as Conservative MPs.

Ministers have been made aware of public and political concern about recent events in the City, particularly the alleged

fraud in the Lloyd's insurance market and at Johnson Matthey Bankers.

Mr Leon Brittan, the Trade and Industry Secretary, and Mr Michael Howard, the Under Secretary for Corporate and Consumer Affairs, each appointed three months ago, see no reason to alter the basic structure for self-regulation set out in last January's white paper on investor protection. They have made clear, however, that parts of the bill should not be regarded as sacrosanct.

In particular, the minister will be prepared to consider a strengthening of the regulatory powers and the possible inclusion of the Lloyd's insurance market within the scope of the Bill.

While ministers see no need to update the 1982 Lloyd's Act, they believe the council of Lloyd's needs to demonstrate continuing toughness towards wrongdoers.

Although the Government does not want to become involved in the dispute between Mr Peter Miller, chairman of

Lloyd's and Mr Ian Hay Davison, the chief executive who resigned early this month, it feels there is no case for altering the terms of reference of the Lloyd's chief executive.

Pressure from Opposition and some Tory MPs is likely for the inclusion of Lloyd's in the Bill at its committee stage in the New Year.

In relation to the framework of regulation, the ministers have been arguing that it is wrong to distinguish between self-regulation and a securities and exchange commission as in the US. They feel the proposed British system will be in the middle.

It has also been pointed out that the new DTI team has not chosen fundamentally to review the forthcoming bill as prepared by its predecessors. Although ministers accept the framework agreed before they took over, they are prepared to be flexible about the details.

The second reading of the bill is expected in mid-January after the end of the Christmas recess.

Investment income tax change aids widows

By Clive Wolman

THE LARGEST group to benefit from the abolition of the investment income surcharge in last year's Budget were widows and other single women with taxable incomes below £13,000, according to figures published yesterday.

The figures, included in the Inland Revenue's survey of personal incomes, show that in the fiscal year 1982-83, 314,000 taxpayers were liable to the 15 per cent surcharge because their investment incomes exceeded the threshold of £6,250.

Of these, 98,000 were single women, of whom 58,000 were basic rate taxpayers with taxable income below £12,800.

The number of single men liable to the surcharge was 36,000, of whom 16,000 were basic rate taxpayers. Another 25,000 married women who benefited from a wife's earnings election were liable to the surcharge. A total of 155,000 married men were liable to the surcharge, of whom only 54,000 were basic rate taxpayers.

The burden of the surcharge on single women thus increased substantially during its past few years. In 1979-80, only 73,000 single women were liable to the surcharge, of which 49,000 were basic rate taxpayers.

The statistics show the proportion of higher rate taxpayers rose sharply between 1979-80, the year the Conservatives replaced the Labour Party in government, and 1982-83.

In 1979-80, only 686,000 taxpayers or 3.2 per cent of the total, paid tax above the basic rate. In 1982-83, there were 1,071 higher rate taxpayers or 5.1 per cent of the total.

Government moves since 1983 to raise tax thresholds by more than the rate of inflation are estimated to have reduced the proportion of higher rate taxpayers to about 4 per cent.

A sharp increase in the number of taxpayers claiming mortgage interest tax relief is also indicated by the figures. In 1980-81, 6,07m taxpayers claimed relief. By 1982-83 the number had risen to 6,82m.

There has been a three-year lapse since the last survey of personal incomes was published by the Inland Revenue. Since then the data base has been expanded to include about 60,000 taxpayers, and the methods of analysing the statistics refined.

Board of Inland Revenue, the Survey of Personal Incomes 1982-83, HMSO, £1.95.

Details given for probe into BSC efficiency

By Ian Rodger

THE Monopolies and Mergers Commission has published the terms of reference for its investigation into the efficiency of the British Steel Corporation.

The investigation, which is to be completed in six months, is part of a programme of studies of the efficiency of nationalised industries launched by the Government a year ago.

So far, only one such investigation, on the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board, has been completed. In a report published last month the commission made 57 recommendations to ensure more efficient control of the board, including the setting of cost control targets.

The investigation will be given to the fund without any deduction for expenses and the costs of the collection which will be met by the banks, lawyers, printers and trustee company concerned.

Mr Timothy Phillips, the fund's deputy director general, said yesterday that the bulk of the money would go to Sudan where the fund is spending about £1m per month.

Princess Anne, the president

Jason Crisp on optimism at a troubled computer company

Sinclair's program for recovery



MR Jeffrey: Sinclair's managing director

THERE is remarkable optimism at Sinclair Research, considering that the company was on the verge of collapse in the summer. The size of its problems are shown in the report and accounts received by shareholders yesterday, some 10 weeks later than usual.

The bloodbath in the home computer industry—and incidentally semiconductor—has cost Sinclair Research £22.8m in exceptional items, mainly stock write-downs. As a result, a modest pre-tax profit of £4.5m has been turned into an £18.3m loss which is alleviated only by a £7.5m tax credit.

But with most of the bad news apparently out of the way, Sir Clive Sinclair, founder and chairman, and Mr Bill Jeffrey, the new managing director who joined from Mars Electronics, both exude a renewed confidence.

Earlier this week, they spent the day with the company's financial advisers N. M. Rothschild discussing how to raise £10m to restore working capital and enable the company to go ahead with a number of product launches next year.

Sinclair's problems originated last year when the industry was highly optimistic that the home computer boom would continue. But the British public only bought 1.4m units, significantly lower than the previous year. Sir Clive comments in his chairman's report: "The retail trade, over-reacting to the rising market and the supply short-

preceding years, bought 1.8m machines. The pattern was the same in all major markets last year, and the result was a virtually complete cessation of deliveries to retailers in the first three months of 1985."

Sir Clive does not say in his report that Sinclair Research—along with its rival Acorn Computers—also greatly over-estimated demand. The balance sheet for the year to March 3 shows stocks of £21.3m after making write-downs of £17.5m. Given that there were no sales in the first three months of

1985, one can estimate that Sinclair ended the peak Christmas selling season with five months' stock on its hands, on the basis of past demand.

Since the market has fallen this year and the business is so seasonal, the company probably will not get all its stocks right until about March 1986. "We're eating into stocks quite dramatically now," said Mr Jeffrey. The company's most important product, the Spectrum home computer, has been selling so well that manufacturing has been restarted.

The stock problems caused a cash flow crisis this summer, which meant it had to be rescued by its main creditors, Thorne EMI, AB Electronics, Barclays Bank and Citibank. It later led to an abortive £12m rescue bid by Mr Robert Maxwell, publisher of the Mirror Group of newspapers.

But when Mr Maxwell abandoned Sir Clive in August, the company had just clinched a £10m deal with Dixons which enabled it to limp on unaided.

There have been a number of changes at Sinclair Research since the crisis, aimed at converting—a mercurial but haphazardly-run company into a more professionally managed organisation. Sales and marketing have been reorganised and the concept of "brand management" introduced. The already-small staff of 120 has been cut and the board reorganised and sharply reduced in size. New professional managers have joined to beef

up quality control, engineering and financial systems.

Assuming the company succeeds in raising the £10m it needs, it plans to launch new products next year. One of the main strategies is to preserve its position as the dominant supplier in the UK home computer market. Next year should be better for Sinclair.

Sinclair will also move towards the business market with a portable computer—known as Pandora—which Sir Clive promises for late next year.

The Pandora will have a 13 inch flat screen cathode ray tube, like the much smaller one used in the Sinclair pocket TV. "It will also not cost a penny more than the equivalent desktop machine," said Sir Clive.

Sir Clive admitted yesterday that his hope that the pocket TV might become as popular as the transistor radio was not realised.

It has clearly been an exceptionally difficult year for Sir Clive who has also seen a substantial part of his personal fortune disappear with the collapse of his other company, Sinclair Vehicles. Even his salary at Sinclair Research has been cut from £77,000 to £53,000.

Clearly, the company will be rather different, both in terms of management and size. Sir Clive concentrates on the technology, leaving company management to Mr Jeffrey. Turnover will, it is clear, be substantially down on the £102.8m achieved last year.

Liverpool rescue plan approved

BY NICK BUNKER AND IAN HAMILTON FAZEY

THE SOLUTION to Liverpool's financial crisis approved yesterday by the Labour-controlled city council will leave the city's capital resources severely depleted in two years' time.

Mr Tony Byrne, the authority's Labour finance chairman, told a council meeting that the strategy depended on the return at the next general election of a Labour government which would increase the city's annual capital borrowing allocations.

The budget was passed by 48 Labour councillors amid strong opposition from Liberal opponents. It will use a £30m deferred purchase agreement with a syndicate of foreign banks to help close Liverpool's estimated 1985-86 deficit of £76m.

Under the agreement, negotiated months ago through Phillips and Drew, the stockbrokers, the banks will pay for the building of council houses. Liverpool will have to repay the banks about £43.5m, including interest, over five years starting in 1987.

The agreement will free other capital resources to pay for £23.4m of housing repairs and

maintenance charged to this year's budget. Combined with unallocated cuts of £8.5m in spending, and £3m acquired from other Labour councils in unused borrowing rights, this is expected to be sufficient to close the £76m deficit.

The latter figure largely reflects the effect of Government penalties for overspending.

Mr Byrne stressed that Liverpool would need another £30m deferred purchase scheme next year to preserve its house-building programme. There were "clear indications" that this could be on offer from Phillips and Drew, said Mr Michael Reddington, the city treasurer.

Phillips and Drew said last night that a second scheme might be available provided the first one was successfully syndicated among banks, and that Liverpool set a legal rate and budget in 1986-87. The first £30m deal is expected to be signed on Monday.

The council was told that if two deferred purchase schemes totalling £60m ran parallel, they might use up between £11.5m

and £16.5m annually during 1987-91.

Without more borrowing sanctioned by a future Labour government, this would curtail drastically Liverpool's capital programmes from 1987 until at least 1992, Mr Byrne said.

The council hopes that the new budget will enable it to resume borrowing from the Public Works Board, the lender of last resort to local authorities, which stopped lending to Liverpool after councillors passed a deficit budget in June.

Mr Eric Heffer, Labour MP for Liverpool, Walton, described the decision by his fellow members of Labour's national executive to suspend the Liverpool District Labour Party as "an own goal of monumental proportions," Margaret van Hattem reports.

Speaking at the Oxford University Labour Club, Mr Heffer attacked the Labour leadership for publicising allegations that Militant Tendency supporters prominent in the Liverpool party were involved in political corruption and intimidation.

Bankers launch Bond Aid charity plan

BY MAGGIE URRY

CITY BANKERS have launched an appeal to the financial community for the Save the Children Fund. All types of financial businesses, banks, stockbrokers, insurance companies, building societies, both UK and foreign-owned, will be asked to give money and it is hoped that millions of dollars will be raised.

The proceeds will be given to the fund without any deduction for expenses and the costs of the collection which will be met by the banks, lawyers, printers and trustee company concerned.

Mr Timothy Phillips, the fund's deputy director general, said yesterday that the bulk of the money would go to Sudan where the fund is spending about £1m per month.

Princess Anne, the president

of the fund, will be visiting Sudan next week.

The organisers want to reach institutions rather than individuals. "We are all well aware of the natural catastrophes which the world has suffered recently and the generous contributions that have been made by people from all over the world."

"This will be the international financial community's opportunity to show their concern and good will," they said. So far most donations for such appeals have come only from individuals.

The appeal will be in the form of Bond Aid Certificates to be sold in denominations of \$5,000 (£3,300), \$10,000 (£6,600) and \$30,000. Those who donate money will receive a certificate showing how much they gave

and their names will be published in a newspaper advertisement.

Hundreds of companies will be invited to "buy" the certificates with the proceeds going to the top people in each business. The organisers started to send letters out last night. They declined to put a figure on the amount they hope will be raised but expect to receive gifts of millions of dollars.

The appeal is being launched in a similar way to Eurobond issues to "lighten the approach," though the originators want to bring in a much wider range of people than just bond dealers. The date set for payments to be made into the Save the Children Fund bank account at National Westminster Bank is December 19 1985. The fund's telephone number is 01-703 5400.

Call for vote system referendum

By Margaret van Hattem, Political Correspondent

DR DAVID OWEN, leader of the Social Democratic Party, called last night for a referendum on proportional representation.

Speaking to the Peel Society in Tamworth, Staffs, he said electoral reform was "a people's issue," not one for politicians, and there could be little doubt that the people wanted it.

A Gallup Poll this month indicated that 59 per cent of people supported proportional representation and about 50 per cent felt there should be a referendum on electoral reform, whether or not the Alliance, campaigning on the issue, won enough support to force it through Parliament.

The consistent level of public support for proportional representation is very heartening, as well as the fact that a majority see this as an essential reform and prerequisite for Britain's economic and political recovery," he added.

Dr Owen said that to campaign for a referendum on proportional representation was to demonstrate a confidence in the judgment of the British people.

"Any political party that refused the request for a referendum would have some difficulty explaining their refusal," the subsequent and early second General Election. It would be those who had refused who would be on the defensive. It would be they who would be seen as being fearful of the result. It would be they who were afraid to trust the people."

A referendum confined to constitutional issues could, he said, have a blinding quality that would otherwise not be possible without a written constitution.

A referendum could also be used to inhibit constitutional change. The result of the Scottish devolution referendum was often cited by the advocates of proportional representation as a warning against calling a referendum about introducing the change.

Channel link plans clarified

By Andrew Taylor

SOME OF the uncertainty surrounding plans to build a rail tunnel to France, as part of a cross-Channel fixed link, was removed yesterday as two of the contenders to build the link announced final details of their plans.

The two groups, Channel Expressway and EuroRoute, had each proposed two versions of a rail tunnel as well as separate road schemes which they are offering.

Transport department officials who jointly with French officials are assessing the proposals had effectively given the groups until yesterday to make clear which of the rail scheme they are supporting.

EuroRoute is now opting for a separate rail tunnel (initially providing single-track working only) which would open at the same time as a road scheme involving bridges, artificial islands and a mid Channel 21km road tunnel. EuroRoute has also offered a twin-bore rail tunnel which would open 18 months after the road crossing was completed.

Channel Expressway has opted for a separate rail tunnel to run alongside a twin-bore road tunnel carrying two lanes of motorway in each direction. It had originally proposed to have the rail track embedded in the motorway. Road traffic would have been halted while trains ran through.

The two groups have been experiencing difficulties negotiating terms with British Rail and to a lesser extent with SNCF, the French state-owned railway. It was in a bid to resolve some of these problems that both groups had submitted alternative versions of their rail tunnels.

Four schemes have been submitted to the British and French governments which expect to announce by the end of January which of these, if any, will be allowed to proceed.

Liffe passes a milestone

By Alexander Nicoll

THE London International Financial Futures Exchange passed a milestone yesterday when open interest—the size of net outstanding positions—exceeded 50,000 futures contracts for the first time in the exchange's three-year history. The figure reached 50,605.

Its rise is an important sign that the underlying liquidity of the market is deepening. Low open interest generally suggests that most volume is accounted for by members dealing among themselves, rather than by orders from outside customers.

More than 40 per cent of the open interest—a record 21,805 contracts—is accounted for by the exchange's Eurodollar interest rate future, which is its most actively traded contract.

Philips to close systems offshoot

By James McDonald

PYE TVT—part of the Philips electronics group—is to close its Studio Systems business in Cambridge early next year with an estimated loss of 230 jobs.

Philips said yesterday that the decision to close was the result of an industry-wide over-capacity caused by the "package" systems for TV studios in which Studio Systems specialised. "There have been no new broadcast companies of significant size established in recent years and the existing broadcast companies are buying more individual specialist manufacturing," said the Philips announcement.

Lingerie producer calls in receiver

BY ANTHONY MORETON

BERLEI (UK), a leading lingerie producer, called in the receivers yesterday afternoon after County Bank, one of its main shareholders, demanded immediate repayment of a £585,000 loan.

The move came just 16 weeks after a financial reconstruction of the company had been masterminded by the Welsh Development Agency and backed by four local authorities in South Wales.

Mr David Pinckney, chairman, said last night that he or the other directors were aware that County Bank would demand repayment of the loan at short notice they "would not have permitted the refinancing package to have been put in place."

County Bank refused to be drawn on the decision beyond saying that "at the request of the company" it had appointed Cork Gully as receiver. "We do not feel it is appropriate to comment further."

Mr Chris Barlow, one of the joint receivers, said the request had landed on his desk yesterday afternoon and that he and Mr Martin Iredale, the other

joint receiver, "will be reviewing the position over the weekend to decide the future of the business."

"I hope we will be able to keep the company as a going concern."

The jobs of 430 people are now at risk, 280 of them at the two production centres in Merthyr Tydfil and Ebbw Vale and a distribution centre outside Newport. Its head office is in Slough.

The package put together in August involve the WDA putting in a small amount of equity, £75,000, to top up the £1m it already had in the company, and four local authorities, Mid-Glamorgan, Gwent, Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent, providing guarantees amounting to £300,000.

In addition, the WDA bought the freehold factory sites and leased them back to the company.

It is understood County Bank approached the company on November 21 and asked for repayment of the loan within 90 minutes, but on appeal it gave the company a week to raise the money.

GEC offshoot restructures

BY NICK GARNETT, NORTHERN CORRESPONDENT

FURTHER decline in demand for electrical power transmission equipment has forced GEC Switchgear to restructure its business with the loss of about 300 jobs.

The company said yesterday some manufacturing is being transferred to its plants at Stafford and nearby Hixon from Trafford Park, near Manchester. There will be smaller though unspecified job losses at Stafford.

The company, which employs 1,670, said it was incurring substantial trading losses and its manufacturing facilities were too large and costly for existing and anticipated orders. Changes were necessary to safeguard the future of the business and the job security of the majority of employees.

The restructuring reflects shrinking requirements from the Central Electricity Generating Board and manufacturing industry and to a weak level of export orders.

Manufacture of gas-insulated transmission switchgear is being

transferred from Trafford Park, which employs almost 1,100, to Stafford, which will become the centre for all transmission switchgear production.

The making of isolators and various pieces of electricity substation equipment is being moved from Trafford to Hixon. Trafford Park will remain the company's commercial and administrative headquarters. Manufacture of mining equipment, control and relay panels and the procurement of spares will continue there as will the construction division.

More than 150 jobs are to go at the H. and R. Johnson tile factory in Stoke when it closes next year, it was revealed yesterday. Another 39 redundancies are planned within the company which is closing its 145-year-old Campbell tile factory.

Production at the factory will be phased out during the next 12 months and transferred to the firm's main complex at Tunstall, Stoke.

Peter Riddell on how new technology is changing traditional ways political parties spread their message

A vote of support for using computers in election campaigns

"DID IT give Liberals Welsh win?" asked the front page headline of the autumn issue of the Conservative Party's Micro News.

The Tories' answer was yes. The use of a computerised electoral roll was the key to the Liberals' narrow win in the Brecon and Radnor by-election in early July. The system assisted in canvassing and sending letters to voters.

Five months later, a by-election is being held in the safe Labour seat of Tynne Bridge. A visit to the campaign headquarters of the main parties in Newcastle shows how the traditional face of British elections is changing.

Next Thursday's result may be a foregone conclusion—a comfortable Labour win with the real contest being for second place between the Tories and the Alliance. Yet each of the parties is using the campaign to test innovations which could make a big impact at the next general election.

At first sight the party offices have the familiar, slightly scruffy appearance of all campaign headquarters. There are piles of leaflets and canvass cards, maps and posters featuring the candidates, and women,

never men, making tea. However in the back rooms there are shining new microcomputers and word processors together with the leading campaign strategists of each party.

The theory, familiar to all US campaigners, is that information technology can enable candidates to choose the target for their messages more specifically. The conventional mass appeal through sending leaflets to all households is seen as wasteful precious resources.

Instead, parties should concentrate on much smaller segments of the electorate, especially voters inclined to back their candidates and waverers among supporters of other parties.

The key technique is direct mail. This is already being used successfully by the parties on a national basis to raise money and, locally, it provides a means of communication.

The strategists believe that voters like to be taken seriously, and will read and respond to a letter addressed to them personally dealing with their particular concerns.

The problem is how to identify these groups. This is a laborious, if not impossible, task to do manually. Information

technology provides a partial answer. The Liberals used volunteers to put the electoral roll on a computer in Brecon and Radnor, and the Social Democrats have done the same in Tynne Bridge.

In Brecon and Radnor technology helped the Liberals overcome a big problem in rural areas where voters are recorded in alphabetical order as opposed to geographical location. The computerised roll was presented in a useful way so that Liberal canvassers called on as many as 60 per cent of the electorate.

The records were constantly being updated and classified by different categories of housing tenure or occupation. Hence the Liberals were able to send out personally addressed letters to such key groups as bill farmers.

The parties have adopted slightly different approaches in Tynne Bridge. The Tories and the SDP have sent personal letters, to first time and postal voters, while the SDP is experimenting with a canvass card which includes undecided Tories as well as firm supporters.

Canvassers are being asked to estimate the age of voters (under 25, middle aged and over 60) and whether a home is



"Hi—I'm your friendly candidate—this floppy disk will explain my program..."

privately or council owned. The SDP will send out letters aimed at undecided and firm Tory supporters and possibly to other groups, to try to squeeze the Conservative vote and gain second place.

The Tories are using their computer to send letters to groups of expected supporters, for example, about the level of rates in Newcastle. Standard answers have been

prepared on policy issues which are sent out in a variety of combinations in signed letters to voters depending on the questions raised. These people are selected on the basis of queries sent in, canvass returns and a limited use of Acorn (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods) data.

Labour has made a more modest use of word processors, concentrating on removals. The electoral register next Thursday will be 14 months old and roughly a third of the electorate have moved.

With the help of party workers and friendly postmen, a sizeable proportion of these people have been identified and sent a personal letter offering help to vote.

Technology does not, however, remove the need for local activists. Canvassers are still required to collect data and deliver personal letters since the cost of postal charges is high.

The candidates personally sign their letters rather than rely, as in the US, on facsimile signatures. Traditional methods of campaigning such as election addresses, special newspapers and community newsletters are being retained.

Mr David Hughes, Labour's national agent, says computers do the same things as people but more efficiently and release those people for canvassing and other work.

Similarly, Mr John Lacy, the Tory director of campaigning, who is also in Newcastle, refers to a mixture of approaches.

Libya says Egyptian troops ready for combat

By Our Middle East Staff

LIBYA accused Egypt yesterday of having completed preparations for a military attack on its territory. The Libyan news agency Jana said the troops which Egypt had massed on the border during the past few days were now in a state of combat readiness.

It claimed the Egyptian people had been deluded into believing that the military preparations had been made in order to repel a threatened attack by Libya.

Egypt has accused Libya of responsibility for the hijacking of one of its airliners last weekend. Nearly 60 people died when Egyptian commandos stormed the aircraft after it had landed in Malta.

Mr. Ismat Abdel-Meguid, the Egyptian Foreign Minister, said in Brussels yesterday that his country had stepped up border security but denied that it was planning to attack Libya.

Officials in Cairo said investigations were continuing into the hijacking of the aircraft. President Hosni Mubarak has said that it was Egypt's policy to strike at all forms of terrorism.

Libya has denied that it had any hand in the hijack but warned that if it attacked it would deliver a "decisive blow" at Egypt.

Israeli apology for spy scandal

By Walter Ellis in Tel Aviv

MR DAVID LEVY, Israel's Deputy Prime Minister, said yesterday that Israel was apologising to the US in connection with the Pollard spy scandal and was making efforts to prevent any recurrence of such activity.

Earlier, Mr. Shimon Peres, the Prime Minister, had promised the US a report on the Pollard affair within a matter of days together with any documents that may have been unlawfully acquired.

Mr. Levy, a leading member of the right-wing Likud Bloc in the Cabinet, called on the US to present a more balanced picture of the affair and to bring it to a conclusion. The scandal, he said, did not in any way harm US interests or security.

Earlier this month, Mr. Jonathan Pollard, an employee of US Naval Intelligence, was arrested outside the Israeli Embassy in Washington and charged with passing secrets in return for cash. He is said to have admitted espionage and is now awaiting trial.

South Africa in move to step up border security

By ANTHONY ROBINSON IN JOHANNESBURG, PATTI WALDMER IN LUSAKA AND TONY HAWKINS IN HARARE

SOUTH AFRICA yesterday announced plans to strengthen border security. The move coincided with a warning from the African National Congress (ANC) that this week's land mine blasts and a rocket attack were part of "a generalised escalation of... the military struggle."

Mr. Louis le Grande, Minister of Law and Order, said police units on the border would be replaced by soldiers. The decision follows a spate of land mine explosions close to the borders with Zimbabwe and Botswana, and a rocket attack against the Sasol oil-refinery at Secunda.

The ANC office in Lusaka, Zambia, yesterday claimed responsibility for the rocket attack and said that three members of the organisation's military wing were killed by South African forces. In a statement yesterday the ANC said that the rocket attack and landmine incidents were "a generalised escalation of both the political and military struggle against the South African racist regime."

The South African Government accused the ANC of operating from bases in Zimbabwe and threatened not to pursue operations in future. The ANC denied the charge. Zimbabwe Government officials, apparently anxious to avoid a slanging match with South Africa, said yesterday that no immediate public response to Pretoria's threat to send troops into Zimbabwe was likely.

However, foreign ministers from the black front-line states holding a routine two-day meeting in the city strongly condemned the South African threat.

Mr. Le Grange speaking at a police passing out parade in Pretoria, said that withdrawing police from the borders would relieve pressure on the force caused by continuing township unrest.

Over 1,000 policemen yesterday mounted a search operation in the Cape Town squatter camp of Crossroads, in which one black man was killed by police.

Mr. Chester Crocker, the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, stopped over in Johannesburg yesterday en route for Europe after two days of talks in Lusaka.

Trade unions to launch 'super-federation'

By OUR JOHANNESBURG CORRESPONDENT

A MAJOR new force on the South African labour scene will emerge this weekend in Durban when 35 trade unions with 430,000, mainly black, paid-up members formally launch a "super-federation" — the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu).

The new federation, fruit of four years of complex "unity talks," brings together eight unions affiliated to the now-to-be-disbanded Federation of South African Trade Unions (Fosatu), the National Union of Miners (NUM) and unions affiliated to the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the National Federation of Workers.

The federation will be launched under the banner "One Federation, One Country," but its commitment to a policy of non-racism, one of five basic principles, means that two major union groups dedicated to the principles of black consciousness remain outside the new umbrella.

These are the Council of

Contractors lay off 300 after IRA threat

By Our Belfast Correspondent

ABOUT 300 building workers were laid off in Northern Ireland last night, when three contractors were forced by IRA threats to withdraw from contracts for the security forces.

The trade unions said they believed that the death threats against directors and managers of building companies might lead to up to 1,000 job losses.

The Government said it was an act of economic sabotage. The contracts involved the building of police stations and the upgrading of others. Earlier this week the IRA gave the companies seven days to terminate the contracts.

The companies were named by the IRA but asked not to be identified.

Yesterday they began to remove plant and equipment from the sites and said work would stop immediately.

Mr. Nicholas Scott, under secretary at the Northern Ireland Office, said the companies were providing vitally needed jobs. The IRA threats showed cynical disregard for the livelihoods of hundreds of working people and their families.

He said: "Surely even Provisional Sinn Féin (IRA's political wing) claims concern for working people should join the overwhelming majority who utterly condemn such a despicable act of economic sabotage."

Mr. Terry Carlin, Northern Ireland officer of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, said other businesses were likely to pull out of contracts for security forces. Sub-contractors and suppliers would also be affected.

He said: "Up to 1,000 jobs are involved. We hope the companies will do their best to employ their workers but at this time of the year prospects for the industry are not good and the chances of alternative work are slim."

Takeover bids 'menace bank trust funds'

By Clive Wolman

THE "apparently impregnable City financial establishment is breaking down" with merchant banks seeing their investment trust threatened by takeovers and liquidation, says a review published today.

The broker's 1985 review of investment trust companies identifies as a turning point the hostile take-over bid in June for British American and General Trust.

The trust, which was strongly defended by its manager, Kleinwort, Benson, the merchant bank, succumbed to a £63m bid from Shires Investment, a trust one sixth of its size. Laing & Cruckshank acted as adviser to Shires, which is managed by Stanecastle Assets, a new Scottish company.

In a summary of the implications of the acquisition, the Laing & Cruckshank review, which is for private circulation, says: "Trusts managed by establishment merchant banks are now under corporate activity pressure."

"The acquisition of British American and General has proved it to be possible (with careful forethought) to activate a merchant bank managed trust and there are a number of other companies which look somewhat vulnerable."

According to Laing & Cruckshank estimates, merchant banks manage about £2.6bn of investment trust assets. The largest fund manager is Robert Fleming with £1.1bn of trust assets (excluding those of its subsidiary, Save & Prosper).

The Scots missed the opportunity to benefit from the growth of the unit trust and unit-linked life assurance industry in the 1960s and 1970s, the review concludes. However, they are now making up for lost ground by aggressively seeking pension fund management contracts in the UK, US and elsewhere.

In the investment trust sector, over the last five years, 15 companies have been set up in Scotland with a total asset value of £173m compared with nine new trusts in England with an asset value of £191m.

The total value of investment trust assets managed in Scotland is about £5.4bn compared with £17.2bn. Forty investment trusts with assets of £4bn are managed in Edinburgh. 10 are managed in Glasgow and two in Dundee.

Date set for NHS spectacle vouchers

Financial Times Reporter

NATIONAL HEALTH Service spectacles will be abolished from next July, the Department of Health and Social Security said yesterday.

The DHSS said a voucher system would be introduced for people entitled to free glasses, but it was not proposing to abolish free sight tests.

The changes are designed to open up the optical market to competition and bring down the price of spectacles.

John Hunt on the rival camps lobbying over shopping hours

PEERS HAVE been bombarded with publicity this week as the opposing groups in the battle over Sunday trading lobby for support in the crucial vote on the Shops Bill in the House of Lords on Monday.

Spearheading opposition to the legislation, which would sweep away all limitations on trading hours in England and Wales, are the 24 bishops and the other three churchmen. They will get the support of most Labour peers, who are strongly influenced by the views of the Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers and of the Co-op movement, which opposes the Bill.

The bishops can also expect the backing of some Conservative peers who are prepared to defy the Government — unlike the other parties, the Tories will be putting on a strict whip for this second reading debate.

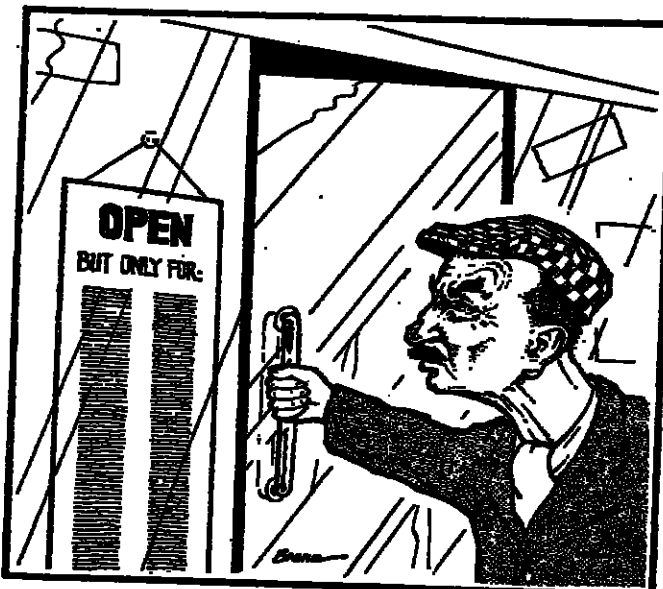
Lord "Bertie" Denham, Government Chief Whip in the Lords, will muster support by putting out one of his famous circulars to bring in the Tory backwoodsmen.

The balance of forces seems to be equally divided, although some shrewd observers think the Government will win narrowly.

But the situation is not clear-cut, and there are many eddies and cross-currents of opinion. Retailers are divided, and the Retail Consortium has left companies to make up their own minds. Those in favour of the bill have formed the Open Shop Organisation, which includes Woolworths, Habitat-Mothercare, Queensway, MFI, W. H. Smith and the DIY Federation.

Against the legislation are some big groups such as Boots and John Lewis, and the National Chamber of Trade, which represents smaller retailers.

Opposition is centred around an amendment which has been put down by the Right Rev. Hugh Montefiore, Bishop of Birmingham, conceding that shop hours should be rationalised, but opposing the complete deregulation of hours contained



in the Bill.

The careful wording of the amendment is intended to attract the widest possible support. The strict sabbatarianism can vote for it, alongside those who are prepared to see some liberalisation of the Sunday trading laws.

The weakness of the amendment is that it does not make much difference to the progress of the legislation. Even if it is approved, the Government will be able to press on with the Bill.

If it is passed, the amendment would represent moral victory for the Government's opponents and is intended to give them a stronger hand in modifying the Bill during the committee stage. Even then, they would still face difficulties.

There are many permutations for committee amendments — the local option for Sunday opening, shops being opened for a limited period, or an extension of the list of goods which can be sold on Sunday. It might be difficult to unite a majority of peers behind one particular amendment.

ancient tradition which we must protect from a revolutionary axe.

On the other hand some influential Labour peers favour the Bill and this is one reason why Labour has allowed a free vote.

Lord Harnmar-Nichols (C), who has introduced several successful private Members' Bills on the subject, is taking a leading role in mustering support for the Bill.

He does not believe that modifications to the present law would be practicable. The way ahead, he says, is to sweep aside the regulations, and modifications could be made at a later date in the light of experience.

His opponents argue that foreign experience shows that once deregulation occurs, it is impossible to reintroduce any form of control, however minor.

The Consumers' Association is backing the Bill. Mrs Rachel Waterhouse, its chairman, says the present laws are "antediluvian."

"Consumers in England and Wales want the right to shop when they and the shops want to do business," she says. "They are voting for that with their feet."

In a shrewd move to get support for the legislation, the Government has chosen Baroness Trumpington, Under-Secretary for Health and Social Security to wind up the debate. She introduced a private members Bill in 1982 to abolish restrictions on shop hours. It was given an unopposed second reading in the Lords but failed through lack of time in the Commons.

The Social Democrats and Liberals are allowing their members to go their individual ways, and the decisive factor on Monday could be the 200 peers on the cross benches.

Whatever happens it looks like being another big occasion in their Lordships' House. Over 30 peers have put their names down to speak, and it is anticipated that the final number will be 40.

Estimates of pension fund surpluses challenged

By ERIC SHORT

RECENT claims that pension funds have surpluses running into several billions of pounds grossly overstate their financial position, R. Watson and Sons, Britain's largest firm of consulting actuaries, said yesterday.

Watson considers the London Business School's estimate of a £50bn surplus to be particularly exaggerated.

The firm advises pension schemes in the UK whose assets

total £50bn — about one-third of the funds of self-administered pension schemes.

Work carried out by the firm's partners indicates that the surplus of pension scheme assets over liabilities is about 5 per cent. This would indicate the total surplus of pension funds to be less than £15bn.

Watson also disagrees with the LBS over the source of such surpluses. The LBS claimed that profit from employees made

redundant was a significant source of surplus.

Watson claims that, although experience varies widely between schemes, the overall financial effect was nearly neutral.

Many companies gave generous benefits to employees who were made redundant and where redundancy occurred through early retirement companies usually gave enhanced pensions which put a financial

strain on the scheme.

Finally, Watson feels that members and pensioners of pension schemes should have their share of the surplus through backdated pension increases and greater provision for future pension increases before companies consider taking contribution holidays or reductions.

With such action, the benefit to the Treasury would be far less than indicated by the LBS.

Saboteurs hit Japan railways

By CARLA RAPOPORT IN TOKYO

CONFUSION reigned for more than 10m Japanese commuters yesterday, following co-ordinated attacks of arson and sabotage against the country's nationalised railway system in Tokyo and Osaka.

The guerrilla action — the worst of its kind in recent memory — has been blamed on a small band of radical leftists who have been opposed to the Government's plans to privatise the Japan National Railways (JNR).

This group, Chukaku-Ha, has also been waging a war of sabotage against Tokyo's International Airport at Narita for more than 10 years.

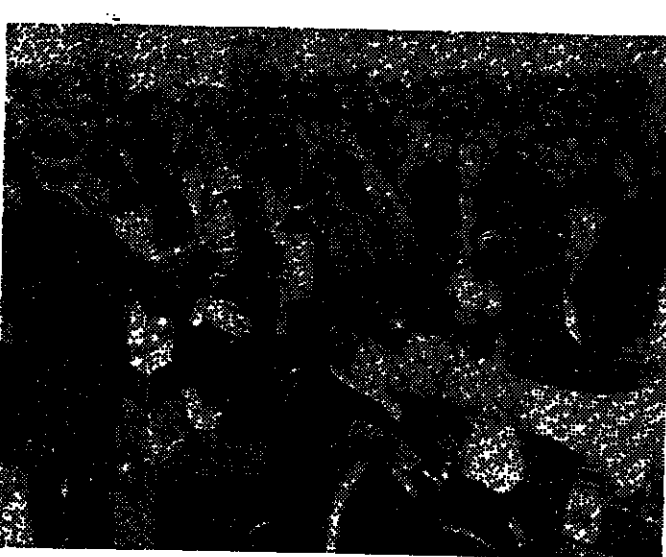
Acting in the early hours of Friday morning, the saboteurs cut the communications cables of JNR lines in around 33 places nationwide, mostly in Tokyo and Osaka.

This paralysed the country's major commuting lines, forcing hundreds of thousands of commuters to stay at home rather than fight their way into town in alternative transport.

The activists also started dozens of fires at railway stations, causing extensive damage. Most of the station facilities at Asakusabashi station in east Tokyo were destroyed before a fire could be brought under control.

In the Osaka area, various JNR facilities went up in flames due to timed ignition devices.

Despite the extent of the sabotage, many railway lines were back in operation by mid-afternoon. None the less, traffic



Police held back crowds of commuters at an Osaka subway station as attacks by radicals paralysed the nation's rail systems.

jams continued to paralyse Osaka, with the congestion and reduced staff causing hundreds of thousands of commuters to cut down or cancel activities.

Banks and department stores operated with half their staff in most cases. Nearly 192 high schools in the Tokyo area were closed. The Tokyo Stock Exchange opened for business at 9 am as usual, but with only one-third of its usual establishment.

The police announced by 9.30 am yesterday that 48 people, including the leaders of Chukaku-Ha, had been arrested.

Japan's Prime Minister Mr. Yasuhiro Nakasone, also ordered a "stringent investigation" into the incident.

Yesterday's action followed a 24-hour walkout by about 1,000 workers belonging to Chiba Locomotive Union, a break-away faction from Nippon Railway Locomotive Power Union, which has 35,000 members, mainly engineers and conductors.

The Chiba faction split from the parent union over the Narita Airport issue. The Chiba Union yesterday said the guerrilla action was unrelated to their walk-out.

"We will continue to struggle as previously stated," a Chiba Union official said yesterday. Their 24-hour walkout, which ended at noon yesterday, had only limited effect on the trains operating in Chiba, an area south-east of Tokyo, which contains Narita Airport.

The extent of yesterday's guerrilla actions caught most Japanese by surprise. Japan prides itself on its low rate of violent crime, a statistic which makes its large cities among the safest in the world.

Despite the serious effect of the damage, however, most were quick to dismiss the action as that of a "lunatic fringe."

The plans for privatising the huge JNR system, as proposed by the Government this summer, call for eliminating as many as 89,000 JNR workers over three years beginning in 1987.

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SURVEY OF STUDENT ATTITUDES TO CAREERS

Industry no magnet for the young

BY JOHN LLOYD, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

NEITHER SCHOOL pupils nor university students and graduates are enthusiastic about creating wealth by industrial means.

Advertising, accountancy, the armed forces and the police all come before industry as a desired career. About 50 per cent of schoolchildren find the matter of industry boring. Working in a factory is at the bottom of everyone's list of desirable jobs.

These findings emerge from a survey, "Attracting the Brightest Students into Industry," by the National Research and Commission for the Committee for Research into Public Attitudes.

The committee, under the chairmanship of Lord Plowden, is an ad hoc group of industrialists, including Sir Trevor Holdsworth, chairman of Guinness and Nestlé, and Mr David Plowden, chief executive of Vickers.

It is concerned about the view of industry taken in schools and colleges. And judging from the results of the research, well it might be.

Among schoolchildren it was found that the ages of 13 to 14 were most commonly those at which children made up their minds on a career. Typically, they get an career-counselling from their parents and do not bother to inform them about industry.

The research shows that

JOBS THOUGHT TO MAKE MOST CONTRIBUTION TO COUNTRY	Age (up to)							Sex
	All	13	14	15	16	17	18+	
Doctors and nurses	84	87	85	87	82	82	83	78
Teachers	64	68	61	63	62	66	67	60
Soldiers/Sailors	58	76	70	60	55	46	41	53
Airmen	44	38	40	44	46	47	48	45
Civil Servants	33	29	32	34	34	35	39	34
Lawyers	25	27	30	27	24	22	30	23
Managers in industry	24	14	18	20	27	34	35	29
Factory workers	21	15	16	19	23	25	26	25
Bank workers	11	12	13	14	10	8	6	10
Computer programmers	10	12	13	9	12	9	9	12
Shop workers	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Office workers	7	7	8	7	7	6	7	9

Source: ORC

there is a strong case for inserting industry into their choices before O-levels are taken.

Family is the main influence on children at younger ages, books and teachers increasing in influence as they get older. They respond well to people from industry who come to schools to talk to them about work. However, they respond best to people involved in the kind of work they themselves might do, rather than to people at the top of the tree, who are often those who visit schools.

For all that, only a third of children who were asked if they wanted a career in industry or commerce preferred that route

before any other. Few had any better reason for doing so than "enjoyment of meeting people."

The survey comments that "perhaps the most important single fact... was that there was no significant understanding of the importance of business as the basis of wealth creation; no appreciation that it was a worthwhile career to follow, either in its own right or by its wealth creation process; or of the benefits it brings to the nation, the sick or the poor."

Among undergraduates the picture for industry improves. Just over two-thirds give a high rating to the idea of working

for industry when it is put to them, "but it is significant that the concept of wealth creation for the country is a very minor motivation."

Money is the main attraction of industry, followed by a judgment that it will be "interesting, creative or stimulating, then by the view that it will give 'job satisfaction.' The research says that "it is nowhere near enough to promise recruits job satisfaction."

Attracting the Brightest Students into Industry, ORC, 2 Wesley Street, London W1M 7PT. £8.50 a volume, £15 for both.

PERCEIVED DRAWBACKS OF WORKING IN INDUSTRY

	ENGINEERING							SUBJECT						
	All	Gen. Mech. Prod.	Electric Electron	Aero	Other	Maths Physics	Biol./Chem.	Computers	Business Econ. Accounts	Social Studies	Humanities Law	All	Gen. Mech. Prod.	Electric Electron
Dull	19	15	15	25	10	13	30	17	12	26	24	19	15	15
Pressure	14	16	14	7	15	10	17	12	11	19	18	14	16	14
Insecurity	10	14	6	7	7	5	9	9	20	11	8	10	14	6
No flexibility	9	9	11	7	8	12	16	4	7	6	8	9	9	11
Few prospects	8	7	9	20	10	5	5	5	8	9	4	8	7	9
Regular hours	7	11	4	9	5	11	5	12	4	5	5	7	11	4
Regimented	6	4	6	7	5	4	10	3	7	9	7	6	4	6
Badly paid	6	16	3	18	7	2	4	8	2	1	4	6	16	3
Impersonal	6	5	5	4	6	4	5	5	4	6	10	6	5	5

Source: ORC.

Revenue wins appeal against oil tax ruling

BY RAYMOND HUGHES, LAW COURTS CORRESPONDENT

EXPENDITURE incurred by Mobil North Sea in its operations in the Beryl field did not qualify under a provision reducing liability to petroleum revenue tax, the High Court held yesterday.

In a judgment that will affect other companies operating in the North Sea, Mr Justice Harman said the expenditure had not been incurred under a contract entered into before January 1, 1981, the cut-off date for tax-reducing supplements introduced by the 1981 Finance Act.

The judge allowed the Inland

Revenue's appeal against a ruling by tax commissioners in Mobil's favour.

It was agreed that, as a result, Mobil was liable to pay petroleum revenue tax on £28.2m instead of £28.2m.

Recognising the importance of the case, the judge certified it for appeal and the Court of Appeal and go on appeal direct to the House of Lords.

The judge said PRT was

levied on oilfield receipts, calculated as the net cash flow to the field owners after deduction from the gross cash flow of the costs of establishing the

field, plus a margin over the actual costs.

The supplement—in effect, a percentage increase on the costs incurred—had been introduced by the 1975 Oil Taxation Act to be added to the costs before a net cash flow was achieved.

The 1979 Finance (No 2) Act reduced the percentage from 75 per cent to 35 per cent; the 1981 Finance Act removed the supplement but provided in section 111(7) that "expenditure... which is incurred before January 1 1981 in pursuance of a contract entered

into before January 1 1981" should not be disqualified from supplement.

The issue was whether about £45m paid by Mobil for "topside modules" was incurred "in pursuance of" a July 1979 contract under which Betchel Great Britain agreed to design and procure a drilling platform for Mobil; or in pursuance of contracts made by Betchel, as Mobil's agent, with three other companies in April, May and June 1981 for the modules; or under the licence granted to Mobil in 1972 to operate in the Beryl field.

BASE LENDING RATES

ABN Bank	11 1/2%	Guinness Mahon	11 1/2%
Allied Dunbar & Co.	11 1/2%	Hambros Bank	11 1/2%
Allied Irish Bank	11 1/2%	Heritable & Gen. Trust	11 1/2%
American Express Bk.	11 1/2%	Hill Samuel	11 1/2%
Henry Ansbacher	11 1/2%	C. Hoare & Co.	11 1/2%
Bank of Africa	11 1/2%	Hongkong & Shanghai	11 1/2%
Associates Cap. Corp.	12 %	Johnson Matthey Bkrs	11 1/2%
Banco de Bilbao	11 1/2%	Knowles & Co. Ltd.	12 %
Bank Hapoalim	11 1/2%	Lloyds Bank	11 1/2%
Bank Leumi (UK)	11 1/2%	Edward Manson & Co.	12 1/2%
BCCI	11 1/2%	Meghraj & Sons Ltd.	11 1/2%
Bank of Ireland	11 1/2%	Midland Bank	11 1/2%
Banko Cyprus	11 1/2%	Morgan Grenfell	11 1/2%
Bank of India	11 1/2%	Mount Credit Corp. Ltd.	11 1/2%
Bank of Scotland	11 1/2%	National Bk. of Kuwait	11 1/2%
Banque Belge Ltd.	11 1/2%	National Giro Bank	11 1/2%
Barclays Bank	11 1/2%	National Westminster	11 1/2%
Tenfield Trust Ltd.	12 1/2%	Northern Bank Ltd.	11 1/2%
Bank of Mid East	11 1/2%	Norwich Gen. Trust	11 1/2%
Brown Shipley	11 1/2%	People's Trust	12 1/2%
CL Bank Nederland	11 1/2%	PK Finans. Intl. (UK)	12 %
Canada Permanent	11 1/2%	Provincial Trust Ltd.	12 1/2%
Cayzer Ltd.	11 1/2%	R. Raphael & Sons	11 1/2%
Charter Holdings	12 %	Rothmans	11 1/2%
Charterhouse Capital	11 1/2%	Royal Bank of Scotland	11 1/2%
Choulaours**	11 1/2%	Royal Trust Co. Canada	11 1/2%
Citibank NA	11 1/2%	Standard Chartered	11 1/2%
Citibank Savings	12 1/2%	TCB	11 1/2%
Citic Merchants Bank	11 1/2%	Trustee Savings Bank	11 1/2%
Bank of China	11 1/2%	United Bank of Kuwait	11 1/2%
C. E. Coates & Co. Ltd.	11 1/2%	United Mizrahi Bank	11 1/2%
Comm. Bk. N. East	11 1/2%	Westpac Banking Corp.	11 1/2%
Consolidated Credits	11 1/2%	Whiteaway Laidlay	12 %
Continental Trust Ltd.	11 1/2%	Yorkshire Bank	11 1/2%
Cyprus Popular Bk.	11 1/2%		
Duxcan Lawrie	11 1/2%	Members of the Accepting Houses Committee.	
E. T. Trust	12 %	7-day deposits 8.25%. 1-month deposits 11.25%. At call with £10,000+ remains deposited.	
Exeter Trust Ltd.	12 %	Call deposits £1,000 and over 9.25%.	
Financial & Gen. Sec. Fin. Corp.	11 1/2%	21-day deposits over £1,000 9.25%.	
First Nat. Sec. Ltd.	12 %	21-day deposits base rate.	
First Fleming & Co.	11 1/2%	See Provincial Trust Ltd.	
Robert Fraser & Ptns.	12 1/2%	Demand dep. 8%. Mortgage 13%.	
Grindlays Bank	11 1/2%		

THE GLENLIVET — DENIED BY THE KING

In the early 1800's, denying the existence of distilleries was a national Scottish pastime.

Oh, they were there, alright. But all strictly illegal. You see, savage taxes imposed by the Philistines of Westminster made distilling the national beverage well nigh impossible.

Tax evasion became the only honourable course. The canny Highlanders took to the hills and the glens.

A whole industry flourished. But it was completely underground. Excisemen, or gaugers, marched North, with orders to stamp it out.

The Artful Dodgers.

But it proved a hopeless task.

All measures to deter the distillers were met with ridicule.

Even a £5 reward for the discovery of a distilling pipe (or copper "worm") did nothing to halt the flow of whisky. In fact it was a boon for the whisky makers.

When a "worm" was worn out, the distiller would miraculously "find" it, hand it over to the authorities, claim his reward and promptly purchase a new one!

Such was the Highlanders' contempt for the law that it was not even considered a disgrace to be imprisoned for illicit distilling.

Indeed, in Dingwall Gaol offenders were treated in the mildest possible way, even allowed out on Sundays and special occasions and "honourably returned."

One approached the governor with the remarkable proposition that they set up a still together in the gaol!

But out of this lawlessness came greatness. The illicit dram was magnificent.

The Reverend Thomas Guthrie was a boy in 1818 and he recalled that "everybody, with few exceptions, drank what was in reality illicit whisky — far superior to that made under the eye of the Excise — lords, lairds, members of Parliament and ministers of the gospel and everybody else."

And the finest dram of them all was The Glenlivet.

The Sassenach Connection.

The Glenlivet distillery was started by one John Gow. Alias Smith.

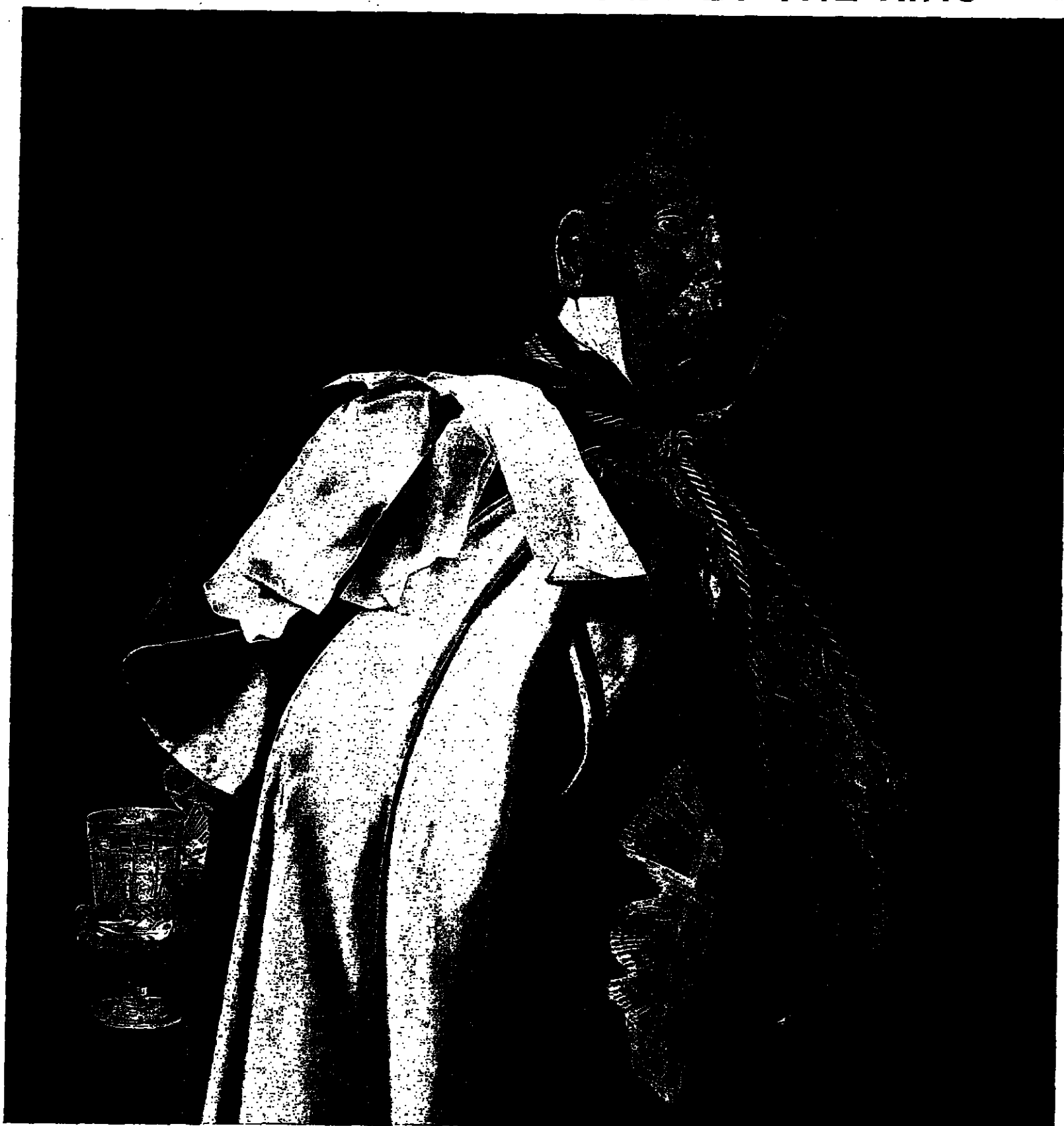
Bit of a mystery, John Gow. Indeed he had very little option.

Having fought and lost with Bonnie Prince Charlie, he had to flee with his family in 1746 to the remote glen of the river Livet.

And to baffle the English soldiers, he changed his name from the gaelic Gow to Smith.

This is why such a Sassenach name as Smith appears on the bottle of Scotland's most venerated whisky.

There in the glen John Smith, ex-Gow, settled in the precise spot where the water and the peat were the best in all Scotland for making



"Glenlivet Distillery? What Glenlivet Distillery?"

malt whisky. This mysterious man had stumbled upon a mysterious well. Josie's Well.

It's the water from this well that makes The Glenlivet magical. We can't tell you why. There is no explanation.

And there is no other well that performs the same magic.

By the time John Smith's grandson George inherited the still in 1817, the fame of The Glenlivet

had spread far and wide.

"It is worth all the wines of France" opined the Doctor in Sir Walter Scott's St. Ronan's Well, "and more cordial to the system besides."

His Majesty's Pleasure.

The Glenlivet that George Smith made even flowed in the corridors of power.

In 1822 King George IV paid an official visit to Edinburgh and

Elizabeth Grant, an MP's daughter, wrote about it in her

memoirs: "One incident connected with this time made me very

cross. Lord Coryingham, the Chamberlain, was looking everywhere for the pure Glenlivet whisky: the King drank nothing else.

My father sent word to me — I was the cellarer — to empty my pet bin, where whisky was long in the wood, mild as milk and the true contraband goût in it."

Such a princely potion couldn't stay illegal much longer. It was unthinkable that the King should ever have to deny that his greatest pleasure didn't actually exist!

Luckily, back at the House of Lords, commonsense was about to break out, under the influence of George Smith's landlord, the Duke of Richmond and Gordon.

In 1823, their Lordships passed an act which made distilling a commercial proposition.

And the first man to take out a licence was our own George Smith.

Plain sailing from then on you'd think. Nothing of the sort.

The neighbours' burning desire.

Although George had decided to go legal, his neighbours in the glen would have none of it. They regarded him as a traitor.

"The outlook was an ugly one," wrote George. "I was warned by my civil neighbours that they meant to burn the new distillery to the ground and nite in the heart of it."

Such threats in the wild remoteness of Glenlivet were not idle. So for his protection, George was presented with a pair of hair trigger pistols, worth ten guineas, a gift from his friend the Laird of

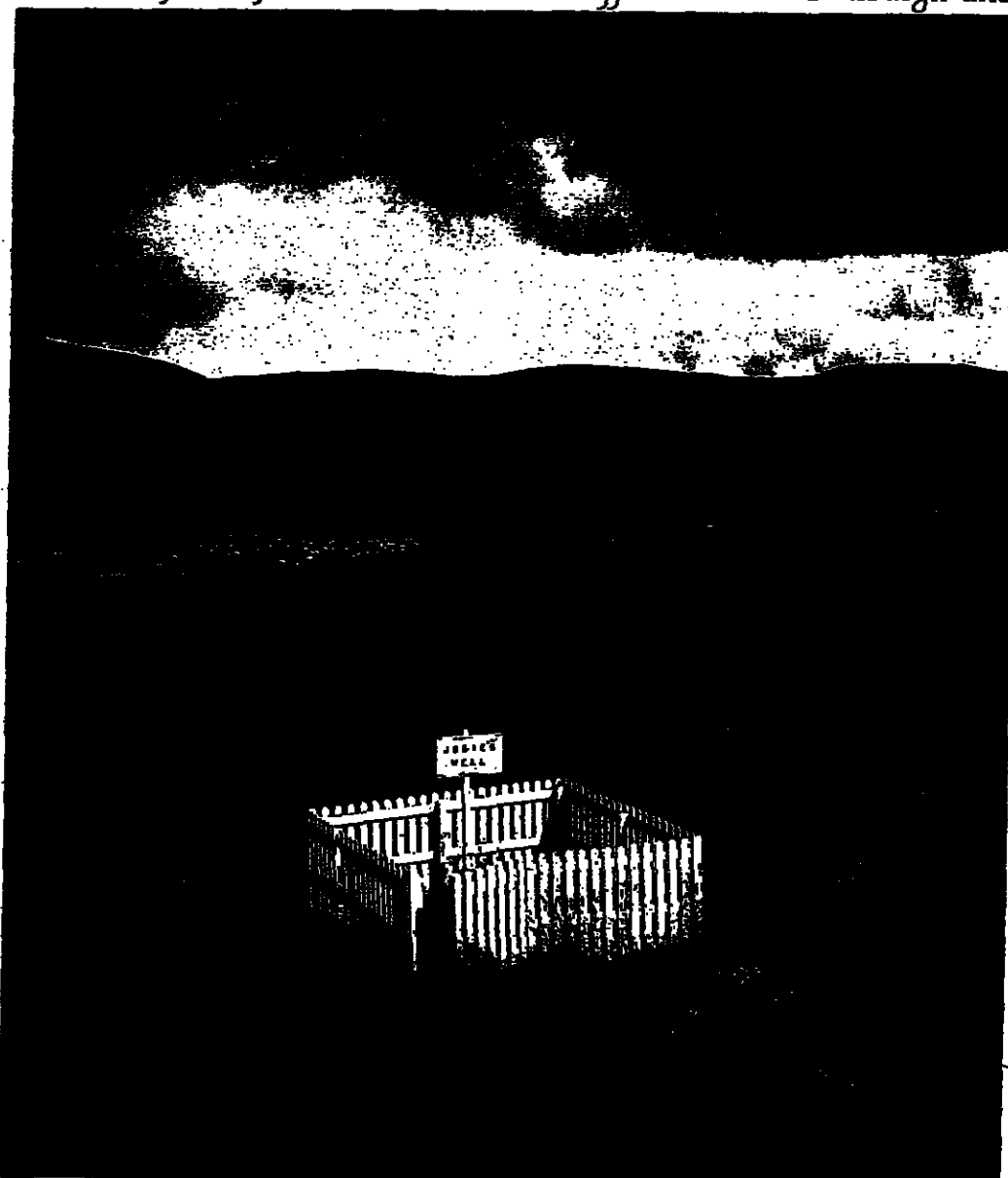
Aberlour. The pistols (which still exist today) were "never out of my belt for years."

I got together two or three stout fellows for servants and through watching by turns every night for years we contrived to save the distillery."

And with it, they saved The Glenlivet. For which we must all be thankful.

For it truly is the benchmark for malt whisky.

The "Grandfather of Scotch."



Scotland's first malt whisky.

FINANCIAL TIMES

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Telegrams: Finantime, London PS4. Telex: 8954871
Telephone: 01-248 8000

Saturday November 30 1985

Fumbling the growth torch

THE Americans are getting impatient with their trade partners and especially with Germany and Japan; meanwhile the Japanese are worried and the Germans almost pining with self-satisfaction. This could produce a good deal of political ill-timber in the coming months, has already produced a much quicker reaction in the currency markets: the rapid and unassisted slide of the dollar against all currencies, and especially the German mark. This fall is itself potential good news as long as it does not get entirely out of hand. This battle of economic policies and perceptions, will determine the shape of 1986. The Americans fear recession, the Europeans hope for non-inflationary growth.

The US view, which is set out at length and with considerable force in the current Morgan Guaranty review of financial markets, goes like this. The world recovery of the last three years, which was strong in Asia and the US itself, weak in Europe and non-existent in the Latin American debtor countries is now at an end. The US is struggling to reduce its trade and fiscal deficit, and the recession which has already appeared in some usually dynamic Asian economies could spread world wide unless somebody else takes up the running in stimulating demand.

This has been an American theme for some time now, but is being pushed much harder since Mr. James Baker took over at the US Treasury; indeed, the unfinished business of the Group of Five meeting which initiated the latest dollar decline was to have been a passing of the fiscal torch to Germany and Japan. Both have now flatly refused to pick it up. The Japanese are worried because their economy is already very sluggish by their standards, and they have in addition had to tighten monetary policy to make sure the yen stays strong. The Germans are confident because with a spontaneously strong mark they hope to cut rates soon.

Litmus test

The trouble is that the policy discussion is really a dialogue of the deaf. The Americans believe that high taxes are the greatest bar to economic performance; the Germans and the Japanese are much more concerned to sustain low deficits. The Americans believe that growth must be stimulated by government actions; the Germans and Japanese believe that governments do most for growth when they reduce their financial demands. Bankers also think differently on the two sides of the Atlantic. The response to Mr. Baker's modest attempt to restore flows of new capital to Latin America has been seen as creative statesmanship on the

western side of the ocean, but compliance here has been grumbling and reluctant. In the conventional terms politicians use when they are discussing economics, the Americans are deploying Keynesian arguments, while the Germans and Japanese are much more monetarist (though the real differences are much more complicated than that). The litmus test question is about the importance of interest rates.

High rates

This is partly a matter of experience. The Americans have recently watched domestic investment peaking when real interest rates were still very high, and declining as rates have fallen. They argue that high rates reflect high confidence, as potential borrowers bid against each other. Indeed, one "black box" model of the US economy which has won itself a keen commercial following enshrines this. It reads next year's growth from this year's Treasury Bill rate; the higher the rate of interest, the higher the expected rate of growth.

German analysis is quite different. In past business cycles the German economy, which is most competitive in heavy capital plant, has characteristically boomed late in each international cycle as consumer demand eased, interest rates fell, and manufacturers took the chance to enlarge their overstrained capacity. Their analysis lays heavy stress on the relative cost of capital, therefore they now hope that as US consumer borrowing reaches the point of surfeit, their investment customers will be able to borrow on more attractive terms.

The financial markets have clearly caught a strong whiff of rising German self-confidence; both the mark and German stocks (which have in any case far outperformed Wall Street in recent months) reflect this. German optimism will be justified if the world's major corporations see lower real interest rates as a chance to modernise outdated plant; but not if they are aware of what the crude statistics show—large unused capacity in most industries and most countries.

The British view seems closer to the American than it was; the emphasis is on tax cuts, and the Government seems content to let interest rates remain near the top of the world league. This reflects both political priorities and the fact that British wage costs are rising much more obstinately than those of any other major economy. But the British do not doubt secretly hope that everyone else will pull the interest rate lever out of the fire, reducing the debt burden and encouraging the growth of trade; we follow less Germanic policies, but hope that the Germans are right.

THE FADING PRIVATE HEALTH CARE BOOM

A grey hint of future expansion

By Robin Pauley

NERVOUS investors in private hospitals, a glittering growth and profit sector in the early 1980s, are now asking this question: has the boom merely stalled in the US and Britain, or is it over for good?

In the US, the leading corporations are urgently restructuring in the face of falling profit margins. Those same corporations are also aiming for control of the major part of the private hospital business in Britain, where there are signs of some of the same ills befalling the US market.

On the face of it, there is plenty of potential with only 9 per cent of the UK population having private medical insurance. The market grew steadily but undramatically until 1974, then levelled off during the period of the last Labour Government. (The total number of people covered by insurance rose from just over half-a-million in 1955 to 2.4m in 1979.)

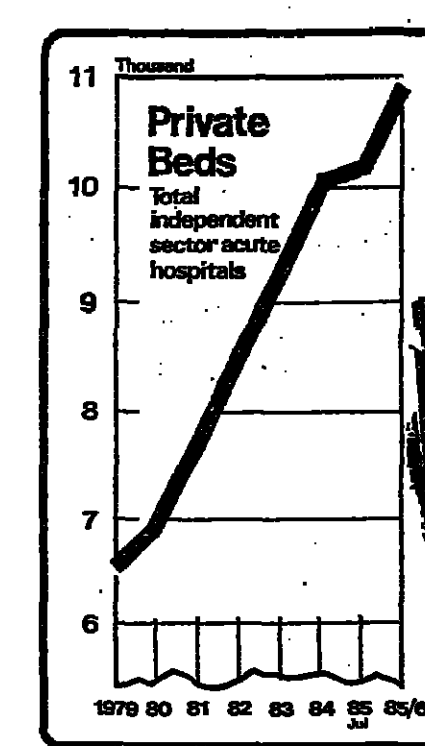
When the Conservatives came to power in 1979 they made clear that competition and market forces should apply as much to the health sector as to any other and the growth of both insurance cover and private hospital provision accelerated.

While the insurance market, now worth around £500m a year and covering 5m people, remains firmly in British control—the country's three major provident associations hold more than 90 per cent of the business—the commercial private hospital sector has proved a magnet for foreign capital, mainly American but also some Arab investment led by the Kuwaitis.

There are now 201 private hospitals in Britain, compared with 149 in 1979, and the number of beds is up from 6,578 to 10,155 over the period. Within this total the charitable sector has grown only very slowly, up from 88 hospitals in 1979 to 95 now. The "for-profit" sector has increased over the same period from 61 to 106 hospitals and from 1,900 beds to 4,385 beds.

The same leading US corporations which are reviewing strategy at home are those which spearheaded this commercial expansion. They are American Medical International (AMI), Hospital Corporation of America (HCA), Humana, and National Medical Enterprises (NME). Between them these four own or control 12 per cent of the US commercial hospital sector with 900 hospitals and 115,000 of the total in-hospital beds.

The British have not been wholly inactive in this expanding market. But the Americans, backed by enormous capital bases in the US and looking for a substantial base for European operations, have made most of the running. The British Nuffield Hospitals, for example, remains the largest independent hospital chain in the country but has grown only from 30 hospitals in 1979 to 33 now, increasing its beds from

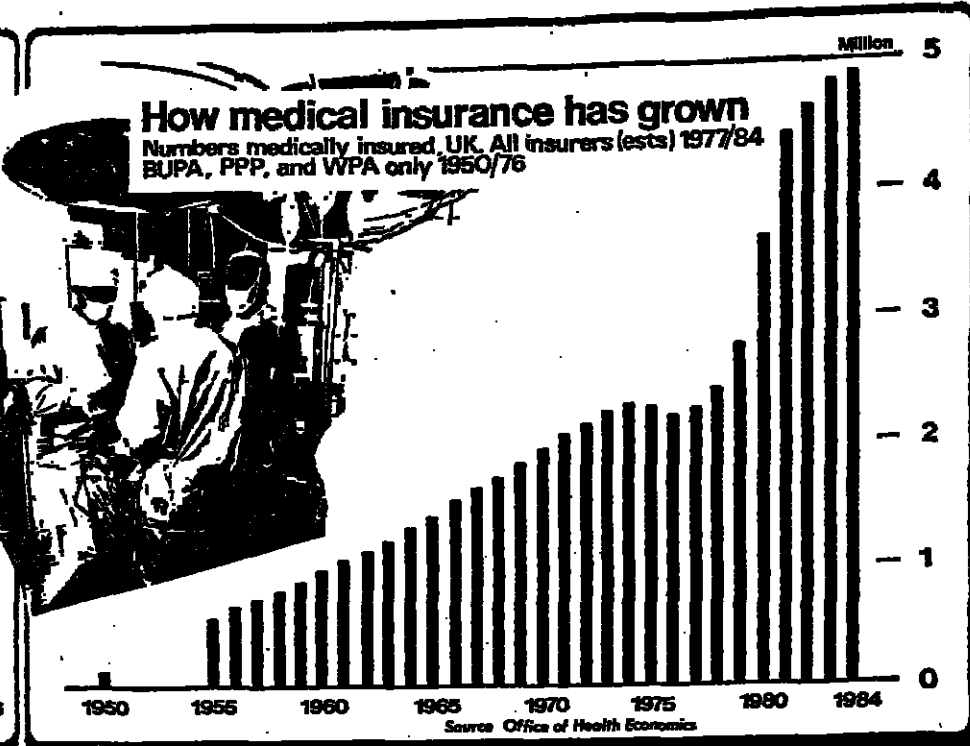


1,029 to 1,365. Over the same time, AMI alone has gone from two to 13 hospitals and from 265 beds to 1,190.

The only example of a British attempt to penetrate the US market is the entry of the British conglomerate, Grand Metropolitan, into the commercial medical sector as part of its diversification programme. GM Health Care owns or manages four hospitals in the UK and is looking for more. Grand Metropolitan has a market capitalisation of £2.2bn and returned profits of £334m on turnover of £5.1bn, making it the only UK operator to tackle the major US medical operators on their own ground. Grand Met has already started to test the US waters by buying a US eye-care chain followed by the purchase of Quality Care, a major US operator of home health care services, particularly for the elderly.

A recent analysis by the Office of Health Economics, a research organisation founded by the British Pharmaceutical Industry, shows a wide socioeconomic and regional variation in demand for private health insurance. Nearly a quarter of professionals have cover, but only 3 per cent of semi-skilled and unskilled workers. The ring of Home Counties around London has the highest proportion of its population covered for private medical treatment (13 per cent) followed by Greater London (10 per cent), the south east and the south west. The lowest proportions are 3 per cent in the North, Scotland and Wales.

The commercial developers have not missed the point. They have provided between 26 and 46 beds per 100,000 population in the four Thames health regions covering most of the home counties and south east but only three beds per 100,000 in the North and nine in Wales



and Scotland.

But even in the areas with the highest concentrations of private provision the National Health Service remains the bedrock of hospital care in Britain, particularly for accidents and emergencies but also for the sectors whose high investment and/or low profitability makes them unattractive to the private sector.

The private sector is principally attracting people who need or want non-emergency operations for which they wish to choose the doctor and the precise date of the operation. They are also paying for enhanced comfort, service and privacy in surroundings somewhere between hospital and hotel standards.

The carefully planned strategies to generate maximum profits may have been too zealous in both Britain and the US for the private medical

boom has levelled off in both countries since 1982-83. In the US the Government and employers started to jib at the soaring open-ended costs of medical treatment which had contributed to repeated annual growth of 20 per cent in profits of the major corporations.

In Britain growth tailed off for the same reasons—escalating hospital charges which forced up the cost of insurance premiums.

Between 1981 and 1983 when the retail price index rose by 14 per cent, the average subscription cost per person covered rose by some 61 per cent, says Mr William Laing, of the Office of Health Economics. The consequent slowdown in growth has forced both insurers and commercial hospitals to look for ways to cut costs.

Insurance costs, however, are still rising causing some employers again to sound the

warning bell. Mr David Lowe, manager of British Airways Employee Relations Systems, says the cost per person in BA's health insurance scheme has risen by more than 20 per cent since 1984. "If that continues my company will seriously consider withdrawing from its present position of paying for health cover for its staff."

It is not only companies that are affected. Although private medical insurance is an increasingly popular "perk," it is a myth that this constitutes the main part of the market. Only about 30 per cent of medical insurance policies are wholly paid for by employers with another 15 per cent paid partly by employers. The majority—55 per cent—are paid by individuals.

In Britain, as in the US, the commercial sector is pausing to review its strategy in the light of the less glittering outlook for growth and profits—with some 90 per cent of the population still uncaptured.

HCA's eighth hospital at Worcester is due to open in January but beyond that the company is "reviewing future developments."

Mr Gene Burleson, AMI's dynamic chief executive in Britain, said recently: "We are not doing so hot at the moment but I think the future prospects look much better." He admitted that the "traditional" market of acute care in private hospitals was now "largely satisfied."

His response is a new strategy, largely fulfilled in the US, to tap some potentially lucrative specialist markets which might restore the glitter to the tarnished sector. AMI, for example, plans to open Britain's first private casualty unit in Windsor. Earlier this year the company bought the

Harrow Health Centre for £700,000, taking over Britain's only fully privatised GP service. The company is also planning to move into private psychiatric care, a potentially large market in which there are only 30 private NHS beds. Two of the leading US operators in the psychiatric field—Charter and Community Psychiatric Hospitals—have already been attracted to Britain and have five hospitals between them.

Analysis who have watched the rapidly developing troubles in the US are not surprised at the turn of events in the UK.

Mr Robert Cohen, a managing director in the Butcher Capital Markets division of Rutchers and Singer of Philadelphia, was in Britain last month to look at the private health sector.

"The situation appears similar in both countries," he reports. "There is no shortage of venture capital in both the UK and US but after the phenomenal private health expansion in 1980 to 1983 in which many venture capitalists got badly burned, especially in biotechnology, people are going to be much more wary about where they invest. Traditional concepts of high profit generators, like acute hospitals, are out and new markets will be required."

"The obvious next growth areas in the US are going to be nursing home beds—there is a demand from hospital management organisations and retirement communities."

As in the US, the elderly in Britain are living longer and making up a growing proportion of the population. There are already signs that the "grey" population is a growth area for the British private health sector. The number of private homes for the elderly doubled to 5,100 between 1981 and 1984. Up to 1980 and beyond the number of elderly people in long term care is projected to rise at the rate of 6,000 to 7,000 a year with public sector provision unlikely to increase.

In addition to residential nursing homes, the British market is following the US market with a new growth area in sheltered homes for the elderly with developers offering a variety of schemes which provide accommodation with call bells linked to a warden resident on the site.

The Americans are looking one step ahead of this. They have started to develop small communities for the elderly with full medical and hospital facilities on site, the latest being in Indianapolis, where one company is putting "b retirement homes and another company is establishing a medical and nursing home complex across the road."

"Some sheltered housing projects have failed in the US because of the lack of medical facilities so now the two are being provided together. That'll probably be your next development in the UK," says Robert Cohen.

THE AMERICAN LEADERS

AMI, based in Beverley Hills, made its first acquisition in Britain in 1970 by buying the Harley Street Clinic and is the largest foreign operator in the country with 12 hospitals and 1,200 beds.

HCA, second largest foreign operator, is based in Nashville, Tennessee, where it set up in 1963 with one hospital. It has 443 health care centres and more than 60,000 beds around the world. Its first British venture was at Solihull in 1982. When it became clear that such British factors as planning delays could slow down its rapid growth programme, HCA bought a ready-made chain of hospitals by paying \$14.5m for Selctabart Holdings' six provincial hospitals.

Humana was established in 1961 in Louisville, Kentucky, where it now has four large

hospitals and is one of the city's largest employers. In 1977 it took over the much larger American Mediacorp to become the third largest US group. In 1976 it bought the expensive top-of-the-market Wellington Hospital in North London, following corporate policy by renaming it the Humana Wellington, Britain's largest commercial hospital with 265 beds and a particular expertise in heart surgery.

National Medical Enterprises (NME) is based in Los Angeles and much of its heavily diversified operations are concentrated in California. It arrived in Britain earlier this year by buying most of the assets of United Medical Enterprises, including the Alexandra and Eland Hospitals giving it 85 beds.

Man in the News

Ian Paisley

Pragmatist behind the fire and brimstone

Margaret van Hattem



WHEN Ian Gow, the junior Treasury minister who resigned over the Anglo-Irish Agreement, told the Commons last week, "it is not necessary to have a big mouth or a loud voice to sum up deeply about Ulster," everyone knew whom he was talking about.

For the past 15 years, the biggest mouth and the loudest voice in Ulster have been universally attributed to the Hon Member for Antrim North, the Rev Ian Paisley.

Mr Paisley is the Englishman's idea of the rabid Orangeman blown up to near-mad dimensions. He bickers and rants, in Parliament and on the airwaves. He insults the English and the Irish. He abominates the Pope in language from the seventeenth century. He marches private loyalist armies up and down the hills of Antrim, and he leads the rabble through the streets of Belfast. He is strident, domineering, and a thorough embarrassment to the gentler folk in London, Belfast and even Dublin.

Those who know him better say he is also clever and amusing. He has a great sense of humour, is a very shrewd political operator, and greatly enjoys playing the role that has served him so well. Even John Hume, the leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party who has been sparring with Mr Paisley for 15 years, enjoys his political skills when, in the European Parliament for instance, they find themselves fighting on the same side.

Last week in the Commons, Mr Paisley played both roles at once in a beautifully controlled performance that reached his two audiences without provoking either. To the folks in Ballymena listening to the debate on the radio, it must have been heartening to hear him refer grandly to "the 200,000 people at City Hall calling for order and calm, and the 100,000 in the Commons, shouting and grand but bland, and very funny."

He spoke of people living on the border, wives and mothers of policemen and soldiers, of the funeral processions, the sorrows and the heartaches—in the way the people at home have come to expect. But, unlike some of his colleagues, he avoided both the self-pity that so disgusts the other audience, and the recriminations that so offend it.

He offered an explanation, to those who were listening intently, for his occasionally outrageous behaviour in the Commons. Perhaps he did not, he conceded, get much credit at Westminster. "But what does it matter? The best thing for a man in this place is to know that his people are for him. The important thing is that the grass roots that I

represent know that I represent them the way they should be represented."

Mr Paisley is firmly rooted in his own community. Born in Armagh 59 years ago, the son of a Baptist minister and a Scots mother, he grew up in Ballymena, the small town which is still his political power base. After studying at the Barry School of Evangelism in South Wales and the Reformed Theological Hall in Belfast, he began his career in the rough docklands area of Belfast, quickly acquiring a name as a fierce scourge of the Church of Rome. In the 1950s, he founded his own church, the Free Presbyterian which, when he is not engaged in overt political activity, he runs as an evangelical power house—preaching, recording religious programmes

for American radio, editing a magazine, making and selling tapes of sermons. In this, he is much helped by his wife, Eileen.

Perhaps the most important element in his Commons speech last week was his attempt to recapture for Unionism the constitutional ground. For Mr Paisley appears to have realised, in a way that some of his colleagues have not, just why the debate went against them in the Commons. It is not that the Tory Party has undergone a conversion to the nationalist view of Ireland, nor—as Mr Enoch Powell would have it—that the Prime Minister has been forced by Washington and the Foreign Office to betray his principles. It is quite simply that the nationalists—primarily Mr Hume—have succeeded in mov-

ing the goalposts so that the nationalists are now the ones arguing for the rule of law and the primacy of Parliament. They have shown that anyone can be a respectable member of the club and play according to the rules when the rules suit them. And in the Commons—as was seen in the dispute over withholding EEC contributions, the Falklands War, and particularly Ulster—the one thing that will not be tolerated is defiance of the rules.

So Mr Paisley homed in on this point, stressing again and again his acceptance of the ballot box, his disdain for UDI, his refusal to get mixed up in street rioting.

He also, in explaining the rationale behind the unionist tactics of resignations and New Year by-elections, gave a clue as to what it is that has taken one of the shrewdest operators in the business onto the streets and up and down the hillsides over the years.

"There is a crisis in our land," he said. "The only thing that will steady our people is the opportunity to do something." Mr Paisley may have flirted with the paramilitaries in the past, he may have incited and aroused the passions of the unionist people he may have played on their fears. But when all the shouting finished and the steam was released, he has brought them down to earth again and sent them quietly home.

Where will he go from here? He would like to see devolved government returned to Stormont and appears to accept that he can get it only through negotiation with John Hume's nationalists. He is not talking openly about power sharing and, indeed, insists that the Anglo-Irish Agreement has so stacked the cards against the Unionists that they cannot be expected to talk while it remains in force. Is this an opening bid? It may well be. But Mr Paisley, that most cautious of politicians, is not going to negotiate except from a position of strength. Last week he came as close as is possible for him to appealing to Parliament for a helping hand.

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Animals in the lab: an industry besieged

ONE OF the British drug industry's most pressing problems came into ugly focus one weekend at the beginning of this year. In the small hours of Sunday morning six houses in Beckenham, south London, were attacked with firebombs, bricks and paint stripper. A fire at one of the houses had to be put out by the occupant, Sir John Vane, the Nobel prize-winning scientist.

All those attacked had connections with one of Britain's most respected drug companies, the Wellcome Foundation. Some had retired, and one had left to work as a veterinary surgeon. All had at some time been connected with experiments involving the use of animals.

Wellcome is by no means the only target. In April last year 100 demonstrators stormed the drug research headquarters in Cheshire, doing considerable damage and stealing animal research data. Two months ago, two scientists at a joint industry/government biological research establishment had their cars blown up, with a warning that next time the cars might not be empty.

Around Britain, drug companies' research establishments look increasingly like fortresses, heavily guarded and surrounded by double perimeter fences. Filling cabinets are padlocked and chained to the wall. Security, in some cases, has been extended to scientists' homes.

The British lead the world in action against animal experiments. The lobby ranges all the way from established bodies such as the RSPCA, which has the need for animal research in principle but wish to limit it in practice, to several locally organised extreme groups such as the Animal Liberation League and the Animal Liberation Front.

Strength of British feeling on the issue is of very long standing. It is more than 200 years since Dr Johnson, in an impassioned article against animal experiments, wrote: "If knowledge of physiology has been somewhat increased, he surely buys knowledge dear who learns at the expense of his humanity. It is time that universal resentment should arise against these horrid operations."

Recent extreme manifestations of that resentment while very far from universal, pose a host of problems for the drug industry. Besides specific questions of physical security, there is the matter of public image.

Recent measures by the UK Government to limit the industry's profits—the reduction of NHS-derived profit levels, the restriction of the number of drugs allowed on prescription—have reacted partly on a shrewd appreciation of the sympathies of the electorate, some of whom have a vague feeling that it is inherently wrong for industry to make profits out of healing. Publicity on the sensitive topic of animal research, drug companies feel, could deepen the prejudice.

This may be exaggerated. Two drug companies which also have consumer operations—Boots and Beecham—have this year been the target of organised consumer boycotts based on their involvement in animal research. Both report that the tactic had little effect on their business.

A further problem concerns those working for the drug companies themselves. One industry executive, pointing to the research data, says: "The big difficulty is keeping these things as unobtrusive as possible. Our people get upset."

The head of pharmaceuticals at another company agrees. "A lot of people working here don't like what we're doing with animals in the first place. It's a classic case of double vision: like people who queue up at the butcher's, but would do anything to avoid a slaughterhouse."

The delicacy of the topic is evident throughout the UK Government's proposed legislation on animal experiments, due to be enacted early next year, which will replace the old Cruelty to Animals Act of 1976 and codify subsequent informal amendments.

The supplementary White Paper published in May of this year puts the case for animal research forcibly. "Research into cancer, arthritis, multiple sclerosis and the many unsolved areas of disease in man and animals, often crippling, must continue. Medicines and vaccines must be tested for safety. . . . Much of this work has no direct involvement in procedures on living animals. It is our duty to our people as well as to our own people to keep up our leading place in biomedical research."

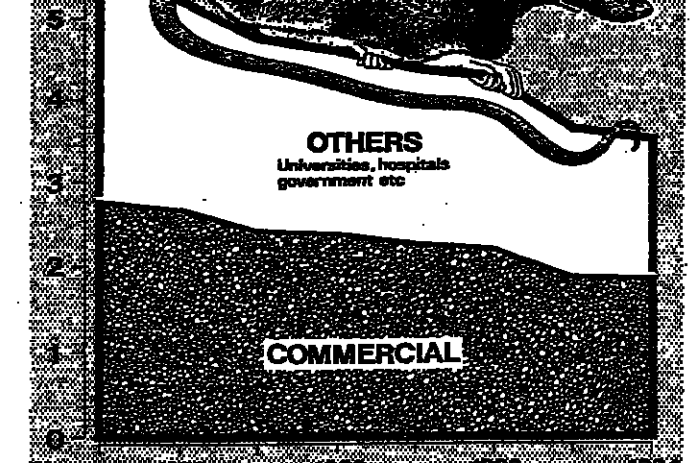
But, as the White Paper also insists: "One of the tests of a civilised society is its treatment

of animals." In a revealing phrase, the paper argues for continued special treatment for dogs, cats and horses. "It is right to pay special attention to the companions of man for whom there is the greatest public concern."

In fact, experiments on these three species totalled only 0.6 per cent of the 3.5m experiments carried out last year in the UK. The animals which bear the real brunt of research are mice, making up 54 per cent of last year's total, and rats, making up a further 25 per cent. The guinea-pig, the test animal of folklore, is little used; experiments on guinea-pigs last year were fewer than experiments on fish.

The UK drug industry, while anxious to avoid the impression that the new Bill is toothless, is clearly broadly satisfied with its contents. Possible problems include the new system of project licences, whereby each proposed piece of research involving animals will have to be individually licensed.

In the main, though, the new Act will have little effect on existing procedures. By general consent British legislation on



Dr Albert Bodmer, chairman of the Swiss drugs and chemical firm Ciba-Geigy, emphasises that animal research remains essential. He adds, however, that the chemical and pharmaceutical industry has reduced its use of animals in research by some 45 per cent since 1977, and is in a position to make further reductions thanks to alternative

methods which it has itself developed.

This raises the question of how much scope exists for similar reductions in the UK. ICI claims to have halved its animal experiments since 1977. Dr Ian Purchase, ICI's head of toxicology, points to some areas where further reduction might be expected.

In the testing of acute toxicity, a central and mandatory technique is the LD50 test. This establishes how much of a given substance it takes to kill 50 per cent of a population of test animals. "In the 1930s," Dr Purchase says, "dozens or even hundreds of animals might be used for one LD50 test. Statistical techniques now make it possible to use far fewer."

A second area of reduction is the so-called Draize test—one of the most emotive areas in animal research. This involves testing for irritation, either on the skin or in the eye. Its use in testing for cosmetics is widely felt to be the industry's weakest point in the whole debate, though experiments on

animals for cosmetics last year had dwindled to only 0.5 per cent of the total.

"There are a lot of alternative techniques being developed," Dr Purchase says. "For instance, you can now take off the horny outer layer of skin—including human—and test that for irritation. For eye tests, there are techniques being developed using eyes bought from the slaughterhouse."

There are clearly areas, though, where the use of animals cannot be eliminated. Dr Purchase says "at the beginning of any assessment of a chemical which is lethal to the whole organism in ways not understood, you simply have to use whole animals. If you then discover that the poison affects only red blood cells, you can work only with blood cells."

"But the general perception in the scientific community is that although you can improve and reduce the use of animals, and can minimise distress, there is ultimately a core of work where you cannot see animals being replaced even by the end of the century."

Some in the industry would go further. New legislation on safety involving the mandatory use of animals is on the increase. This sometimes applies not only to new drugs or chemicals being brought into use, but to older drugs which have not been subjected to modern tests.

In the view of some researchers, this trend will soon slow the decline in the use of animals, and may in the long run even reverse it. Animal research seems likely to remain a contentious topic. There is certainly little prospect of it going away.

Sir Terence Conran Some questions of style and substance

By David Churchill, Consumer Affairs Correspondent

WHEN senior management at British Home Stores were told last Monday morning that Sir Terence Conran was to become their White Knight, thereby saving them from an unwanted takeover battle, they broke into spontaneous applause. Their hand-clapping was prompted not so much by relief that potential predators had been outmanoeuvred but more from a sense that the Conran "magic touch" was going to be applied to their rather staid BHS chain.

"He's a true 'modern man,'" enthuses Rodney Fitch, one of Conran's former design acolytes who has now spawned his own company aimed at rejuvenating other tired-looking retail chains. But is the Conran reputation actually greater than the substance?

Sometimes, certainly, the image fails to live up to the reality. Not for nothing is Habitat somewhat cruelly known as "Shabitat" in some quarters because of pragmatic concern with quality rather than style.

Yet for every detractor of the Conran retail empire which encompasses Heal's furniture store, and the Richards and Now fashion chains as well as Mothercare and now BHS—there are at least as many vehement supporters who have grown up with Habitat and still trust Conran to provide the style and sophistication in a consistent package.

The Conran image was formulated after an orthodox education at Bryanston and for a time learning the techniques of design at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, followed by an 18 week job designing furniture. He dabbled with the restaurant business in the late 1950s.

In 1964 Habitat was born in London's fashionable King's Road, encapsulating style at a price that still included some sort of exclusivity.

At this stage, however, Conran did not seem to be anything more than a clever designer who had captured the mood of the time.

The 1970s saw a gradual expansion of the Habitat stores in both Britain and in the US and France—with the overseas expansion running into the same sort of difficulties that faced other overseas UK retail ventures at that time.

Yet the day before Conran's fiftieth birthday all this changed when Habitat went public; two months later the company merged with the considerably larger Mothercare chain, followed in subsequent years by the acquisition of Heal's and the launch of the Now chain for fashion-conscious teenagers, support for Burton's bid for Debenhams and this week the merger with BHS.

Conran promises that the same approach will be adopted with BHS, revealing a distaste for the sort of bitter takeover battle that Burtons fought with Debenhams earlier this year. "I would have had sleepless nights thinking about the magnitude of what we were trying to take over Debenhams," he admits.

A large rumpled-looking man who retains a boyish charm, Conran believes that business should be a pleasure as well as a job. "Business life and pleasure are merged together because I enjoy immensely everything I do."

His management style at the Habitat/Mothercare offices on top of the Heal's building in Tottenham Court Road is informal rather than bureaucratic. Yet others believe the cultivated laid-back air masks a certain insecurity on Conran's part.

Conran believes that the remarkable loyalty he commands comes from working hard and making sure that everyone knows what is expected of them. "They seem very simplistic things—but they seem to work for us," he says.

He dismisses criticism that he spreads himself too thinly. "I worked out the other week that I spend over half my time on design matters related to the work we are doing for our companies and clients," he says. "Where next for Conran? I'm certainly not the sort of retail megamanager some people make me out to be."

His expansion has largely come about in the past few years because we can get together with other people who have different strengths to make something better out of the whole."

Now 54, Conran, believes that "round about 60" would be a good time to hand over the reins of the day-to-day running of the business to someone else, while retaining a design involvement in its affairs.

Conran's style following the merger with Mothercare was to do nothing for some months while he and his management team learnt about the business. "It was very much a two-way process," he recalls. "They told us about financial controls and we tried to demonstrate that goods that are well designed will actually improve sales. They looked upon us with some surprise at first, but gradually things were done."

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Investing funds

From Mr P. Chappell
SIR—Mr Wilkie (November 27) asks who will fund the PSBR and buy British Gas if the cash flow of pension funds was reduced by the £5bn of annual over-funding suggested by the London Business School Survey.

The answer is straightforward—the PSBR will have been reduced by £1.75bn and companies themselves, subject only to the increased dividends they may pay out, will have additional cash flow of £3.25bn. The cash flow of pension funds, still running at some £12bn p.a., will be quite sufficient to pay for British Gas and the reduced PSBR.

By reputation actuaries find accounting too exciting but this simple arithmetic should be clear to all in the real world. Nothing has changed: only the securities paper-chase is reduced by removing a distortion. While the full extent of over-funding may be debatable the wider implications of its happening deserve more detailed analysis.

Philip Chappell,
22, Frogmal Lane, NW3.

Retirement on a pittance

From Mr A. Davis
SIR—A few days ago a colleague pointed out to me that prior to the present pension scheme coming into effect in the 1970s, his previous 23 years of contributions to the company's imposed pension scheme entitled him on retirement to £7 per week.

While this type of situation is widespread equity demands that such surpluses as identified by London Business School (November 25) should be utilised to improve the lot of those who face retirement on a pittance.

A. S. Davis,
55 Church Road,
Willington, Beds.

The deer hunters

From the Chairman,
Deer and Somerset Stagholders
SIR—Among the inaccuracies in Mr Rowley's letter (November 23) readers should be aware that hands are not hunted in an advanced state of pregnancy, as the hind-hunting season ends on February 28, more than three months before any calves are born. Three-quarters of the growth of the foetus occurs in the last six weeks of pregnancy and at the end of February it can be weighed in ounces rather than pounds.

They should also know that "secret shoots," which have not

Letters to the Editor

been held for over three years and only then at the express request of farmers who suffered intolerable damage, were secret only in the sense that unlike normal hunting days were not advertised in the press.

No one disputes that there is some degree of cruelty in killing any animal but every honest stalker will admit that one slightly inaccurate rifle shot, however legal and well-intentioned, which results in a wounded deer escaping capture can cause more cruelty than a whole season's hunting. The hunted quarry is either shot at close range at the end of the hunt or escapes entirely unhunted.

Mr Hamilton Fazy (November 16) makes the most important point which is universally understood in staghunting districts by all those, hunters or not, with the real interests of the deer at heart, that by far the largest of England's red deer herds would not survive the end of hunting by more than five years at the outside.

R. R. Lloyd,
Honeyhead,
Simonsbath,
Minehead, Som.

Exchange rate volatility

From Mr W. Grey
SIR—It would be a pity if talk of increased exchange rate volatility by the Group of Thirty (report and leader, November 25), following hard on the heels of the "real" exchange rates debate, suggested that the trouble was entirely or largely due to increased market participation. Exchange rates are messengers; if the pattern they trace is more turbulent than it used to be, blame not them but the underlying fundamentals.

Now does that turbulence reflect misaligned so much as unbalanced or positively misdirected government policies. If, as the majority of those polled by the Group of Thirty felt, governments should do more to stabilise exchange rates, it is therefore not by central bank intervention unsupported by other measures, but first and foremost by putting house in order that they should set about doing so.

Besides, while large is not necessarily beautiful, market size need not be a destabilising factor; it can be a source of strength. A swift, if occasion-

ally excessive, response to the changing scene can also provide invaluable guidance to policy-makers.

W. Grey,
12 Arden Road, N3.

Charging by the banks

From Mr R. Theobald
SIR—The answer to Professor Craxton (Charging by the Banks, November 27) is "No." He is not alone in being disturbed by the rapacious charges imposed by banks.

In response to a recent complaint of mine I have received a letter which says "we have looked carefully at the bank's overall rates over the years since 1980 and broadly, it does very much seem as if any over-all increases are not just steady small ones and not normally as much as inflation." The writer then goes on to quote his bank's charges for each cheque paid in which have risen steadily from 8p in 1981 to 12p in 1985, an increase of 50 per cent in the period. So far as I can make out from the General Index of Retail Prices Schedule 18.3 the rate of inflation over this period has been 26.5 per cent (a 1985 value of 375.7 compared with 1981 value of 297.1—January 1974 being 100).

The letter to which I am referring did not go into details of other charges but in the same period the charge for remittance credits appears to have gone up 73 per cent, for debits 60 per cent and for unpaid cheques 54 per cent.

I have no wish to dispute Professor Cranston's claim to a record but have I established another, if not four?

R. G. Theobald,
Two Gates,
Orchard Avenue,
Gerrards Cross,
Bucks.

Covering the facts

From the Director,
Action on Smoking and Health
SIR—The government-sponsored Health Education Council, in conjunction with the British Medical Association, has just published the most detailed ever report on the largest avoidable cause of disease and premature death in England and Wales—cigarette smoking. It does seem unfortunate that compared with the modest 31 column inches you devoted to this report (November 27) you

chose to provide over 14 inches to reporting a fall in the profits of Rothmans International. I realise you are principally a financial newspaper, but surely your readers are also interested in health? Your competitors certainly thought so—one gave over 10 times as much space to the report as you did; and even another, which is noted for its lack of interest in preventive medicine, gave five times as much.

David Simpson,
511, Mortimer Street, W1.

Local community money

From the General Secretary,
Southwark Council for Voluntary Service
SIR—Last week the Government announced the money it intends to make available to each local authority area to replace Greater London Council funding for local community activity. Southwark and many other inner London boroughs are to receive far less financial help than had been calculated. Our estimates have been made on government assurance that allocations would be according to the social needs of an area and to the amount of GLC funding currently being received by local voluntary and community groups.

As the figures announced are so different from those expected, the voluntary sector has done its own calculations. These reveal that every Conservative-controlled local authority has been given 41.1 per cent of the money it requested, and each Labour authority (except Barking) 27.5 per cent. The Liberal London Borough of Richmond has been given 37.8 per cent.

The DoE explanation is that Conservative areas "considered" their bids, whereas Labour ones did not. Certainly most Labour boroughs decided to submit all GLC-funded projects which seemed to them eligible for funding, but so did five Conservative-controlled areas. The Government has in any case always assured the voluntary sector that it was not intended to suffer as a result of the abolition of the GLC, so why should Labour (but not Conservative) authorities seeking to fund everything be penalised?

We are forced to the conclusion that the Government does not want much-valued GLC projects in Conservative areas to fold just before the next local elections. It seems not so con-

cerned if advice centres, ethnic minority projects, youth activities, etc. close in inner London or it wishes to force the financing of these projects back on the much poorer rate-payers of the inner city.

As a voluntary organisation we do not wish to draw party political conclusions, but would be grateful if anyone can supply a less cynical explanation of this extraordinary move.

Jenny Stiles,
135, Rye Lane, SE15.

Membership of councils

From the Director of Social Services,
London Borough of Islington
SIR—Aside from its unfortunate sexist connotations, your leader, "Jobs for the boys" (November 18) misses the key point. That is how a nation can expect its leading elected local authority members to exercise their major executive responsibilities at the same time as holding down a full-time job or meeting the heavy commitments of caring for young families without substantial additional help. Over the 14 years that I have done my job, I have observed the personal cost to successive chairmen of the social services committee of Islington to achieve this reconciliation. A chairman of our social services committee will find it hard to meet the responsibilities in less than 30/40 hours a week, sometimes more.

The issue is not whether elected members are "free leading" in their employ—I have never observed this—but why should it be necessary for it to arise? What company chairman would expect to exercise the complex responsibilities of a local authority committee chairmanship, with its absence of comfortable performance indicators such as profit or loss, for the miserable stipend that can be scraped together from members' allowances? I appreciate that an operational revenue budget of £31m a year is not enormous by the standards of most readers, but taken in the setting of scale of human misery and competing in demands in the inner city, its deployment calls for (and receives) the most detailed oversight from elected members.

Our local democratic system is based on the premise of getting something for almost nothing. It is this that is the fundamental disenfranchisement. Parliament pays its MPs so that they can exercise their non-executive responsibilities. Let us hope that the Widdicombe inquiry can find a way of recognising the executive responsibilities of our elected members who carry leading roles, rather than confining its attentions to the obsessions of a local writer.

J. Rex Prier,
54, Highbury Crescent, N5.

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Abbey National	7.00	8.00	8.75/9.00/9.25/9.50 Five Star acc.—instant access/no penalty 9.50 Higher interest account 90 days' notice or charge 9.50/9.75 "City" Cheque-Save
Aldo Thrift	9.20	—	—
Alliance and Leicester	7.00	8.00	9.75 Premium Plus min. £500, immediate withdrawal (penalty if balance left is under £10,000) instant access/no penalty 9.25 9.25/9.50/9.75/9.95/10.00/10.25/10.50/10.75/11.00/11.25/11.50/11.75/12.00/12.25/12.50/12.75/13.00/13.25/13.50/13.75/14.00/14.25/14.50/14.75/15.00/15.25/15.50/15.75/16.00/16.25/16.50/16.75/17.00/17.25/17.50/17.75/18.00/18.25/18.50/18.75/19.00/19.25/19.50/19.75/20.00/20.25/20.50/20.75/21.00/21.25/21.50/21.75/22.00/22.25/22.50/22.75/23.00/23.25/23.50/23.75/24.00/24.25/24.50/24.75/25.00/25.25/25.50/25.75/26.00/26.25/26.50/26.75/27.00/27.25/27.50/27.75/28.00/28.25/28.50/28.75/29.00/29.25/29.50/29.75/30.00/30.25/30.50/30.75/31.00/31.25/31.50/31.75/32.00/32.25/32.50/32.75/33.00/33.25/33.50/33.75/34.00/34.25/34.50/34.75/35.00/35.25/35.50/35.75/36.00/36.25/36.50/36.75/37.00/37.25/37.50/37.75/38.00/38.25/38.50/38.75/39.00/39.25/39.50/39.75/40.00/40.25/40.50/40.75/41.00/41.25/41.50/41.75/42.00/42.25/42.50/42.75/43.00/43.25/43.50/43.75/44.00/44.25/44.50/44.75/45.00/45.25/45.50/45.75/46.00/46.25/46.50/46.75/47.00/47.25/47.50/47.75/48.00/48.25/48.50/48.75/49.00/49.25/49.50/49.75/50.00/50.25/50.50/50.75/51.00/51.25/51.50/51.75/52.00/52.25/52.50/52.75/53.00/53.25/53.50/53.75/54.00/54.25/54.50/54.75/55.00/55.25/55.50/55.75/56.00/56.25/56.50/56.75/57.00/57.25/57.50/57.75/58.00/58.25/58.50/58.75/59.00/59.25/59.50/59.75/60.00/60.25/60.50/60.75/61.00/61.25/61.50/61.75/62.00/62.25/62.50/62.75/63.00/63.25/63.50/63.75/64.00/64.25/64.50/64.75/65.00/65.25/65.50/65.75/66.00/66.25/66.50/66.75/67.00/67.25/67.50/67.75/68.00/68.25/68.50/68.75/69.00/69.25/69.50/69.75/70.00/70.25/70.50/70.75/71.00/71.25/71.50/71.75/72.00/72.25/72.50/72.75/73.00/73.25/73.50/73.75/74.00/74.25/74.50/74.75/75.00/75.25/75.50/75.75/76.00/76.25/76.50/76.75/77.00/77.25/77.50/77.75/78.00/78.25/78.50/78.75/79.00/79.25/79.50/79.75/80.00/80.25/80.50/80.75/81.00/81.25/81.50/81.75/82.00/82.25/82.50/82.75/83.00/83.25/83.50/83.75/84.00/84.25/84.50/84.75/85.00/85.25/85.50/85.75/86.00/86.25/86.50/86.75/87.00/87.25/87.50/87.75/88.00/88.25/88.50/88.75/89.00/89.25/89.50/89.75/90.00/90.25/90.50/90.75/91.00/91.25/91.50/91.75/92.00/92.25/92.50/92.75/93.00/93.25/93.50/93.75/94.00/94.25/94.50/94.75/95.00/95.25/95.50/95.75/96.00/96.25/96.50/96.75/97.00/97.25/97.50/97.75/98.00/98.25/98.50/98.75/99.00/99.25/99.50/99.75/100.00/100.25/100.50/100.75/101.00/101.25/101.50/101.75/102.00/102.25/102.50/102.75/103.00/103.25/103.50/103.75/104.00/104.25/104.50/104.75/105.00/105.25/105.50/105.75/106.00/106.25/106.50/106.75/107.00/107.25/107.50/107.75/108.00/108.25/108.50/108.75/109.00/109.25/109.50/109.75/110.00/110.25/110.50/110.75/111.00/111.25/111.50/111.75/112.00/112.25/112.50/112.75/113.00/113.25/113.50/113.75/114.00/114.25/114.50/114.75/115.00/115.25/115.50/115.75/116.00/116.25/116.50/116.75/117.00/117.25/117.50/117.75/118.00/118.25/118.50/118.75/119.00/119.25/119.50/119.75/120.00/120.25/120.50/120.75/121.00/121.25/121.50/121.75/122.00/122.25/122.50/122.75/123.00/123.25/123.50/123.75/124.00/124.25/124.50/124.75/125.00/125.25/125.50/125.75/126.00/126.25/126.50/126.75/127.00/127.25/127.50/127.75/128.00/128.25/128.50/128.

Thorn screen division deal near

BY CHARLES BATCHELOR

Cannon Group, owner of the classic cinema chain, and Heron International, Mr. Gerald Rouson's privately-owned company, have emerged as the strongest contender for the screen entertainment division of Thorn EMI with an offer worth almost £110m.

News of their joint bid for the business, which includes the chain of more than 100 ABC cinemas, produced a wave of protests from leading British film makers concerned at the concentration of so many cinemas under the same ownership.

Cannon accounts for 24 per cent of the UK cinema market while Thorn EMI has 33 per cent. Rank has 23 per cent while independent operators have 20 per cent.

Mr. Rouson is seeking the intervention of the Office of Fair Trading to obtain a reference of the deal—if it goes through—on monopoly grounds.

Cannon is a Los Angeles-based company headed by Mr. Menachem Golan and Mr. Yoram Globus. It claims to be the largest independent film producer in the US and owns chains of cinemas in the UK, the Netherlands and Italy.

Heron, which has joint video interests with Cannon, said last night it was negotiating the final terms of the contract and it hoped to complete the deal next week.

Thorn EMI screen entertainment will be run as a joint venture, Mr. Alan Goldman, a Heron director said. It would not be broken up.

Heron said it believed it was the only group still negotiating with Thorn EMI, a view which was confirmed by cinema industry sources close to the transaction.

But the management group, headed by Mr. Gary Dartnell, chairman and chief executive of the screen entertainment division, said it was continuing negotiations on its £90m bid.

The management team is raising finance in Britain and the US through Bear Stearns, a US securities house.

"We have a credible bid on the table," said Mr. Michael Garston, of Bear Stearns. "We have written a letter saying we are confident we can raise the finance. We can deliver."

The screen entertainment division made a pre-tax profit of £11.5m on turnover of £132m in the year ended March 1985.

Thorn put it up for sale following the arrival of Sir Graham Wilkins as chairman in June on the grounds it did not fit in with Thorn's other activities.

Mr. David Puttnam, producer of "Chariots of Fire," said Cannon had no record of supporting the British film industry.

"I can't see any way in which the industry would be better off by this deal. I hope Thorn EMI is being guided by something other than cash or an awful lot of effort put into British films over the past seven years will have been wasted."

Mr. Simon Patten, chairman of the independent producers association, said: "This is a grim moment indeed. I hope the Monopolies Commission will look very carefully at it."

See Lex

Matthew Brown steps up bid defence

By Lionel Barber

Matthew Brown, the Blackburn-based brewer, is facing a hostile £126m takeover bid from Scottish & Newcastle, yesterday announced a 16 per cent full year pre-tax profits rise to £8.2m.

Continuing its vigorous defence, Matthew Brown also said it was recommending a final dividend of 9.35p per share, making a total for the year to September 1985 of 11.5p. The company intends to produce a profits forecast for 1986 next week.

Mr. Patrick Townsend, chairman, described the bid battle as a "cliffhanger" and urged smaller shareholders, who count for some 25 per cent of the equity, to stick with the company. He believed Matthew Brown's two major institutional shareholders, the Britannic Assurance and Whitbread Investment who hold around 18 per cent, were "solid."

He also disclosed that he expected the company to spend around £300,000 on the eight-month bid battle, a figure covering legal and merchant banking fees and its advertising campaign. "I think the figure is a gross waste of money," he said, "but we did not start the fight."

S & N holds around 26 per cent of Matthew Brown. The national brewer is offering 16 new S & N ordinary shares for every five Matthew Brown shares or a cash alternative of 540p.

On the basis of last night's closing prices, with S & N up 1p to 192p, the share offer is worth just over 614p. Matthew Brown shares, despite the profits rise, fell 1p to close at 572p.

It emerged last night that Schroders, advising Matthew Brown, had bought £5,400 worth of S & N shares, around 0.3 per cent of the equity. Schroders said the move was aimed at locking up any loose equity before the final closing date of December 11. "We believe the outcome will be very close."

S & N advised by Morgan Grenfell, declined to comment yesterday. But Morgan Grenfell said that Matthew Brown's profits rise disguised a less impressive 3.4 per cent increase in earnings per share. Schroders' retention of S & N shares was a "temporary blip" due to a higher than usual tax charge in 1985.

Mr. Townsend said that the recent acquisition of the former independent brewer, Theakston, had yet to come through in the 1985 profit figures. "But the contribution this year from Theakston will certainly be material," he said.

See Lex

Industrial Scotland £7.5m rights

By Terry Povey

Industrial Scotland Energy, the USM listed oil and gas exploration and production company, is raising £7.5m net from a two for five rights issue of 6.5m shares priced at 120p each.

The company has decided to take this call for funds in order to avoid having to dilute its stakes in various blocks in Europe, to pursue further permits in the Paris basin area, and generally to support the exploration programme.

ISE joined the USM in August 1984 raising £7.8m from a one for five rights at 110p. Although better than forecast profits of £3.73m for the 15 months to the end of 1984 were achieved, the company's earnings for the time of its listing (to June 1984) were £1.7m that it was now in a very unsettled period where weaker oil prices would not be offset by currency gains.

The company is active in exploration both ashore and offshore in the UK and holds an interest in some of the blocks awarded in the ninth round of offshore licences. In France the group has been expanding its acreage in the Villepreux and Chantouy oilfields and the Paris Basin.

Dealings in the new shares are expected to start on December 17. The issue has been underwritten by J. Henry Schroder Wagg and brokers to the issue are Fielding, Newson-Smith and Parsons.

DIVIDENDS ANNOUNCED

Company	Date of payment	Current payment	Corresponding payment	Total of last year	Total of this year
Chamberlin & Hill	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4
Crescent	1.05	1.05	1.05	1.05	1.05
Ensign House	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Kittrill	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Headlam Sims	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Kleen-Ex	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Sarasota Tech	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Scott & Mercantile	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Sims Catering	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Tomkinson's	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Unquoted stock	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2

Akzo claims victory in £16m offer for Blundell

BY LIONEL BARBER

Akzo, the Dutch chemicals group, yesterday staved off a late challenge from Reed International, the UK paper and packaging conglomerate, to claim victory in its £16m bid for Blundell-Permaglaze, the troubled British paint maker.

Akzo, advised by S. G. Warburg, bought aggressively in the market throughout the day to take its holding to more than 80 per cent after Reed entered the battle early yesterday morning.

Reed, advised by Kleinwort Benson, offered 185p in cash or an eight for 31 share swap in an effort to entice shareholders who had failed to accept Akzo's 175p cash offer the previous day.

However, Akzo simultaneously countered by matching Reed's offer which soon drove the Dutch group's stake from Thurs-

day's 35 per cent to nearly 40 per cent. Later in the day, Warburg increased its offer to 200p, sweeping its stake to more than 50 per cent, including irredeemable acceptances from institutional shareholders. "We are confident we now have control of the company," said Warburg last night.

Reed disclosed that it had been in discussions with Blundell before the original Akzo offer was announced. Reed held around 6 per cent of Blundell and it was not clear last night what it proposed to do with its shareholding.

Blundell is one of the last independent British paint makers and in recent months has fallen victim to fierce price competition in the UK paints market.

Blundell's advisers, Lazarus, said that the main reason for accepting the Akzo offer was a belief that the bidder would preserve jobs at the company.

Akzo is currently represented in the UK by Sikkens which imports nearly all its paint from the Holland and specialises in the UK car market. On Thursday it hoped that the new owner would use the company's modern Hull paint manufacturing plant to supply Sikkens.

Reed argued yesterday that its subsidiary Crown Paints would complement Blundell's share. Crown was stronger in the retail sector, while Blundell was almost exclusively a supplier to the trade.

Akzo's final offer of 200p per Blundell share values the company at £15.6m.

Tomkinsons at record £1.1m

Tomkinsons, the Worcestershire-based carpet manufacturer, more than tripled pre-tax profits from £358,000 to a record £1.1m in the year ended September 28, 1985. Turnover rose 13 per cent to £18.6m, of which over 80 per cent derived from the UK.

Mr. J. Lancaster, the chairman, says improved results were produced in every quarter and the signs are that this progress is continuing into the

current year. Earnings per 25p share are shown at 35.1p (12.4p) pre-tax and at 25.3p (11.1p) after tax. The dividend is raised by 20 per cent from 5p to 6p net, while a one-for-one scrip issue is also proposed.

In quiet market conditions, the group's principal UK business—the supply of carpets to wholesalers and retailers under the Mr. Tomkinsons brand—strengthened substantially in the year. The same was

true of the export business, which benefited from a buoyant US economy.

Steeles, the contract division, also produced good results and Mid-Wales Farms, the spinning division, provided a strong contribution to group performance, making good use of last year's substantial capital expenditure on high technology equipment.

The chairman says the group has a strong infrastructure and the board is in its resolve to look for further growth.

BET complains to Panel over SGB defence tactic

BY CHARLES BATCHELOR

BET, the diversified services group, which has launched a £120m takeover bid for SGB, the scaffolding company, complained yesterday to the Takeover Panel that SGB has released advance information contained in its defence document.

SGB announced a 33 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £13.5m in the year ended September 1985. It plans to recommend a total dividend of 7.5p, an increase of 10 per cent, and expects to propose a further 20p cash rise to 10p for the current year.

BET protested that information contained in informal press briefings had affected SGB's share price. After consulting Kleinwort Benson, SGB's merchant bank adviser, the Panel ruled that the release of SGB's defence had not been discussed.

BET claimed later, however, that exact figures had been released to journalists. "If this information proves accurate we must protest in the strongest possible terms," said BET. "Our position has been prejudiced."

BET said: "Quite obviously they have given the game away and they have still refused to send us a copy of the document."

Kleinwort defended the actions of journalists as "absolutely proper for the course" and said it was regular practice in bid situations.

The rise in SGB's share price resulted from an earlier announcement that the company had sold its loss-making Australian subsidiary for more than its book value. Kleinwort said.

SGB sold SGB Booker to Boral, the Australian building materials group, for £59.5m cash (£4.5m). SGB Booker is one of a number of SGB's foreign ventures which ran into difficulties. In the year ended September 1984 it suffered a month-long strike in Sydney which, together with being involved in a price-cutting war, led to a substantial trading loss.

A large reduction in these losses is expected in the year ended September 1985.

SGB has made a small profit on the net book value of SGB Booker of £5.7m (£4.1m). SGB will also receive a 3.5 per cent royalty for 10 years on the sale of all SGB products made in Australia.

Mr. Clive Beck, SGB deputy chairman, said: "We have made clear that we are determined to concentrate our resources where we can operate most profitably. Negotiations to sell the Australian business began in September. The proceeds will reduce group borrowings."

SGB's shares rose 6p to 365p yesterday. The three-for-four offer. BET's shares rose 1p to 373p yesterday.

Laura Ashley allocations

MORE than 58,000 applicants are to become shareholders in Laura Ashley as a result of the offer for sale which closed on Thursday.

The company said that in determining the basis of allocation it had tried to introduce a wide spread of shareholders.

All employees of Laura Ashley who applied for shares will have their applications met in full. This will account for 2.35m of the 46.5m shares offered.

After that, those who applied for between 500 and 4,000 shares will receive their names put into an allocation-weighted ballot. (This means that applications for larger numbers of shares will stand a greater chance of winning.) The winners in this ballot will receive 300 shares each.

Those who applied for between 5,000 and 10,000 shares will receive 300 shares each.

Applicants for 20,000 shares will receive 500, applicants for 30,000 shares will receive 600 and applicants for 40,000 shares will receive 800.

Those lying for 50,000 shares and above will receive 1.66 per cent of the number applied for subject to a maximum of 200,000.

Letters of acceptance are expected to be posted to successful applicants next Wednesday.

George Dew, the civil engineering group, facing a hostile £9m reverse takeover bid from Bremner, the Glasgow-based cement producer, yesterday forecast a 70 per cent drop in pre-tax profits to £1m for the year to 1985.

The profits fall is due to Dew's past difficulties in Saudi Arabia and the flat UK civil engineering market, was accompanied by a forecast drop in turnover to £20m (£26m).

However, in a defence document issued yesterday, the group said it intended to recommend a maintained dividend of 3.4p per share, making a total of 3.7p for the year.

Dew attacked Bremner's "total lack of relevant experience" in civil engineering and property development. Bremner and Dew share prices remained unchanged yesterday at 62p and 110p respectively.

Dealings in the shares are expected to begin on December 5.

Abbott Mead Vickers, the advertising group, yesterday announced details of the allocation of shares following the offer for sale of 3.66m shares, 29 per cent of the equity, at 180p. The offer was 20 times over-subscribed, reported Hambro Bank, the company's financial adviser for the issue.

For applications of 200 to 800 —1,000 to 2,500; 3,000 to 4,500, and 5,000 to 10,000 shares there will be allocations after a weighted ballot for 200, 300, 400 and 500 shares respectively. Applicants for over 15,000 shares will receive 3.84 per cent of the shares sought.

Dealings in the shares are expected to begin on December 5.

Erskine House makes progress to £1.2m

Erskine House, the contract service group, raised taxable profits to £1.2m for the half year to September 30 1985, an increase of 41 per cent over last year's figure related to include the results of Bromley Group. The 1984 reported pre-tax result was £810,000.

Turnover on the restated basis was up 32 per cent at £12.78m. Earnings per 25p share rose by 44 per cent to 4.9p and the interim dividend is lifted from 0.6p to 0.9p net—last year's total was 2.5p.

All four operating divisions improved performances, but

Mr. Brian McGillivray, the chairman, said there was still plenty of room for improvement.

He said: "The growth of our management team is growing steadily and we expect to make better returns from our existing businesses as well as strengthening acquisitions. I think the prospects for growth are attractive."

The outlook was for further progress from all divisions, he added.

The office equipment division, which accounts for two-thirds of the total business, produced a healthy growth in its contribution. The chairman saw good

grounds for optimism about prospects for this division and the group was intending to expand it further by acquisitions.

The security and fire side earned a significantly higher contribution and this progress was expected to continue. The sale of PPR Security Group was completed during the period and the accounts showed an extraordinary profit of £448,000 arising from this disposal.

This year's interim figures included the first profit contribution from the pest control division. The chairman said he was confident that, given the

solid foundation provided by Mr. H. G. Greville (acquired in July), this division would contribute a higher proportion to the group's profit.

However, building it rapidly would be more difficult because of the shortage of suitable UK acquisition prospects, Mr. McGillivray said.

Erskine House performed well, exceeding its budget and last year's corresponding result by a considerable margin. Most of this division's contribution to profits had now been earned for the year—its second half result was normally much lower.

Air Call shares suspended

Shares in Air Call, the USM listed telecommunications company, were suspended yesterday at 205p pending negotiations over a possible takeover bid.

The company said: "Negotiations are continuing over a price sensitive contract which is extremely good news for the company."

Air Call was one of the first 10 USM companies and a firm base in paging, answering services and radio telephones.

More recently its profits have been hit by the growing competition in the sector.

Mr. John Stanley, the founder and chairman of the company, died in October aged 60. His family still holds over 50 per cent.

SHT makes agreed bid for R. Kitchen Taylor

Scottish Heritable Trust, the York-based industrial holding company, is making an agreed share and cash takeover bid for Robert Kitchen Taylor, valuing the textile and property investment group at £7.8m.

SHT has been building up a stake in Taylor since March and in September increased its holding to 15.01 per cent. It is offering one share and 88p in cash for each Taylor share with a pure cash alternative of 191p per share.

SHT's shares were unchanged at 114p yesterday, valuing its offer at 200p for each Taylor share. Taylor's shares rose 10p to 188p. The purchase of Taylor will allow SHT to expand its trading and manufacturing

Low Howard Spink 5m share issue

By Terry Povey

AN ISSUE of 5m shares has been announced by Low Howard Spink Campbell-Ewald Holdings to finance the acquisition

reported previously of various advertising agencies in Europe, Australia, Canada and the US from Interpublic Group. Low Howard Spink is a subsidiary of the Howard Spink & Bell (LHSB).

Of the issue which will add almost 50 per cent to the issue shares, IPG will receive 947,000 ordinary and 1,85m non-voting ordinary shares. The remaining 2.2m ordinary shares are to be placed at 300p. Mr. Morgan Grenfell. After the issue IPG will hold 38.3 per cent of the equity and 30.1 per cent of the voting rights

FT-ACTUARIES SHARE INDICES

These indices are the joint compilation of the Financial Times, The Institute of Actuaries and the Faculty of Actuaries

EQUITY GROUPS & SUB-SECTIONS	Figures in parentheses show number of stocks per section	Fri Nov 29 1985										Thurs Nov 28				Thurs Nov 27				Thurs Nov 26				Year ago (approx.)				Highs and Lows Index							
		Index	Day's Change	Est. Earnings Yield (%)	Gross Div. Yield (%)	Est. P/E Ratio	Index	Day's Change	Est. Earnings Yield (%)	Gross Div. Yield (%)	Est. P/E Ratio	Index	Day's Change	Est. Earnings Yield (%)	Gross Div. Yield (%)	Est. P/E Ratio	Index	Day's Change	Est. Earnings Yield (%)	Gross Div. Yield (%)	Est. P/E Ratio	Index	Day's Change	Est. Earnings Yield (%)	Gross Div. Yield (%)	Est. P/E Ratio	Index	Day's Change	Est. Earnings Yield (%)	Gross Div. Yield (%)	Est. P/E Ratio	Index	Day's Change	Est. Earnings Yield (%)	Gross Div. Yield (%)
1	CAPITAL GOODS (228)	578.92	+0.3	9.96	12.61	14.74	577.22	9.96	12.61	579.23	546.29	587.25	25.11	483.30	25.7	587.25	25.11	58.71	13.27	13.27	13.27	58.71	13.27	58.71	13.27	58.71	13.27	58.71	13.27	58.71	13.27	58.71	13.27	58.71	13.27
		649.42	-0.2	10.21	13.23	15.38	649.62	10.21	13.23	651.74	625.49	651.74	26.11	472.11	26.2	651.74	26.11	47.21	13.27	13.27	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27		
2	Building Materials (23)	197.36	+0.2	10.20	12.61	14.74	197.36	10.20	12.61	197.36	197.36	197.36	26.11	483.30	26.2	197.36	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		169.25	+1.2	9.32	12.61	14.74	169.25	1.2	9.32	169.25	169.25	169.25	26.11	483.30	26.2	169.25	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
3	Chemicals (132)	649.42	+0.2	10.21	13.23	15.38	649.62	10.21	13.23	651.74	625.49	651.74	26.11	472.11	26.2	651.74	26.11	47.21	13.27	13.27	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27	47.21	13.27
		138.40	+0.5	10.92	12.61	14.74	138.40	0.5	10.92	138.40	138.40	138.40	26.11	483.30	26.2	138.40	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
4	Consumer Goods (132)	333.15	+0.7	10.36	13.23	15.38	333.15	10.36	13.23	333.15	333.15	333.15	26.11	483.30	26.2	333.15	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		247.47	+0.1	8.90	13.23	15.38	247.47	0.1	8.90	247.47	247.47	247.47	26.11	483.30	26.2	247.47	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
5	Electronics (79)	201.91	+0.4	11.91	13.23	15.38	201.91	11.91	13.23	201.91	201.91	201.91	26.11	483.30	26.2	201.91	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		105.42	-0.2	7.25	12.61	14.74	105.42	-0.2	7.25	105.42	105.42	105.42	26.11	483.30	26.2	105.42	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
6	Food & Drink (14)	79.71	+0.8	3.45	13.51	17.57	79.71	0.8	3.45	79.71	79.71	79.71	26.11	483.30	26.2	79.71	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		81.89	+0.1	8.55	13.68	14.17	81.89	0.1	8.55	81.89	81.89	81.89	26.11	483.30	26.2	81.89	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
7	Furniture (14)	594.26	+0.4	10.13	13.23	15.38	594.26	10.13	13.23	594.26	594.26	594.26	26.11	483.30	26.2	594.26	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		182.45	+2.3	5.68	12.61	14.74	182.45	2.3	5.68	182.45	182.45	182.45	26.11	483.30	26.2	182.45	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
8	Health and Household Products (17)	121.38	+0.4	6.35	12.71	18.55	121.38	0.4	6.35	121.38	121.38	121.38	26.11	483.30	26.2	121.38	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		777.24	+0.4	7.24	12.71	18.55	777.24	0.4	7.24	777.24	777.24	777.24	26.11	483.30	26.2	777.24	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
9	Miscellaneous (132)	1895.58	-	7.14	5.16	17.70	1895.58	-	7.14	1895.58	1895.58	1895.58	26.11	483.30	26.2	1895.58	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		379.63	-0.2	9.47	10.10	12.67	379.63	-0.2	9.47	379.63	379.63	379.63	26.11	483.30	26.2	379.63	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
10	Other Industrial Materials (20)	624.35	+1.1	6.43	2.65	21.00	624.35	1.1	6.43	624.35	624.35	624.35	26.11	483.30	26.2	624.35	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		397.40	+1.1	11.4	1.91	10.98	397.40	1.1	11.4	397.40	397.40	397.40	26.11	483.30	26.2	397.40	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
11	Consumer Services (17)	822.77	+0.5	16.02	4.6	7.12	822.77	0.5	16.02	822.77	822.77	822.77	26.11	483.30	26.2	822.77	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		739.49	+0.3	8.71	9.80	14.84	739.49	0.3	8.71	739.49	739.49	739.49	26.11	483.30	26.2	739.49	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
12	Chemicals (18)	733.42	+0.3	13.46	5.21	9.81	733.42	0.3	13.46	733.42	733.42	733.42	26.11	483.30	26.2	733.42	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		50 <td>220.38</td> <td>-</td> <td>6.93</td> <td>3.62</td> <td>17.18</td> <td>50</td> <td>-</td> <td>6.93</td> <td>50</td> <td>50</td> <td>50</td> <td>26.11</td> <td>483.30</td> <td>26.2</td> <td>50</td> <td>26.11</td> <td>48.30</td> <td>13.27</td> <td>13.27</td> <td>13.27</td> <td>48.30</td> <td>13.27</td> <td>48.30</td> <td>13.27</td> <td>48.30</td> <td>13.27</td> <td>48.30</td> <td>13.27</td> <td>48.30</td> <td>13.27</td> <td>48.30</td> <td>13.27</td>	220.38	-	6.93	3.62	17.18	50	-	6.93	50	50	50	26.11	483.30	26.2	50	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	
13	Shipping and Transport (11)	908.28	-0.2	7.13	3.61	17.28	908.28	-0.2	7.13	908.28	908.28	908.28	26.11	483.30	26.2	908.28	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		940.45	+0.6	8.62	8.21	15.38	940.45	0.6	8.62	940.45	940.45	940.45	26.11	483.30	26.2	940.45	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
14	Telephone Networks (2)	729.61	+0.6	8.78	3.49	14.59	729.61	0.6	8.78	729.61	729.61	729.61	26.11	483.30	26.2	729.61	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		1159.37	+0.5	16.36	7.61	7.50	1159.37	0.5	16.36	1159.37	1159.37	1159.37	26.11	483.30	26.2	1159.37	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
15	Oils (18)	765.73	+0.6	9.67	4.15	12.99	765.73	0.6	9.67	765.73	765.73	765.73	26.11	483.30	26.2	765.73	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
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16	FINANCIAL GROUP (14)	530.43	+0.5	4.59	-	16.39	530.43	0.5	4.59	530.43	530.43	530.43	26.11	483.30	26.2	530.43	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		339.35	+0.30	16.61	5.53	8.60	339.35	0.30	16.61	339.35	339.35	339.35	26.11	483.30	26.2	339.35	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
17	Insurance (Life) (9)	410.57	+0.3	-	4.80	-	410.57	0.3	-	410.57	410.57	410.57	26.11	483.30	26.2	410.57	26.11	48.30	13.27	13.27	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27	48.30	13.27
		1139.57	+0.7	7.16	3.66	18.67	1139.57	0.7	7.16	1139.57	1139.57	1139.57	26.11																						

TSE membership for six foreign firms approved

BY CARLA RAPOPORT IN TOKYO

THE TOKYO Stock Exchange (TSE) has decided to allow six foreign investment banks and securities houses to become the first non-Japanese members in the exchange's history.

The six-part of a 10-seat expansion of membership to 93 seats—were Merrill Lynch, Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley of the US, Vickers de Costa and S. G. Warburg of the UK, and Jardine Fleming, the Hong Kong-based joint venture between Robert Fleming of the UK and Jardine Matheson in Hong Kong.

The exchange did not announce the date when the new members will be allowed to begin dealing, but it is understood to be early next year. Until now, foreign companies

share dealings in Tokyo have been done through Japanese brokers, which charge 27 per cent of the total commission.

The entry of foreign securities firms to the stock exchange marks the beginning of a new epoch, said the TSE president, Mr. Michio Takeuchi.

The new members reacted enthusiastically to the decision. "The opening of these six doors will make overseas investors feel much closer to the Tokyo exchange," said Mr. Satoru Saitoh, general manager of administration for Jardine Fleming in Tokyo.

Four foreign companies which had applied for membership but were unsuccessful were W. I. Carr of the UK, as well as Smith Barney, Salomon Brothers and

First Boston of the US. Jardine Fleming, the largest of the six new foreign members in terms of securities traded in Japan, paid ¥2.86bn (\$13.2m) in commissions to Japanese brokers in the year to September.

Although it will now be able to keep this income once it is a fully-fledged member, the first-year costs of membership are expected to be between ¥1.3bn and ¥1.4bn.

This will include around ¥1.1bn for the membership and the rest due to the costs of hiring or traders and buying extra computer equipment.

The four Japanese firms given approval for membership are Imagaawa and Hirooka Securities of Osaka and Okachi and Tokai Securities of Nagoya.

Inco to close mines and cut production

By Bernard Simon in Toronto

INCO, the nickel producer, is to close three mines and cut output at several facilities in Canada, Wales and Indonesia in an effort to hold production in line with 1985 sales expectations.

The company said that recent cuts—reducing its workforce by 1,200 employees or 9 per cent of the total—need to be augmented by further cuts "because of the current sluggishness in the nickel market and depressed prices for nickel and copper."

The three mines to be closed are at Sudbury and Thunder Bay, Ontario, leaving only seven of the company's 14 mines in the Sudbury area in operation.

The normal five-week holiday shutdown at Inco's refinery at Clydach, Wales, will be extended by a further five weeks next summer.

One of three electric furnaces at the company's loss-making Indonesian operation, P.T. Inco, will be closed for at least six months.

Stringent cost controls have enabled Inco to return to profits this year after 13 consecutive quarters of losses.

Net earnings in the first nine months of 1985 totalled \$45m compared with a C\$81m loss a year earlier. The company has generated a substantial cash surplus and reduced its debt by C\$188m so far this year.

Inco did not say what impact the latest cuts will have on output. Its 1985 production is estimated at 940m lb, equal to 25 per cent of world output, totalling 1,230m lb. The company expects 1986 demand roughly to match this year's levels of 1,200m lb.

Interim boost for Anglo American

By Kenneth Marston, Mining Editor

NET PROFITS of Anglo American Corporation of South Africa advanced 30 per cent to R452.4m (£116m or \$170.4m) in the half year to September, equal to 198.2 cents a share, and results for the full year are expected to show a similar improvement.

The interim dividend is raised to 50 cents (12.8p) a share from 35 cents—the previous year's final was 31. Anglo says the increase in dividend has been made in view of the improved results and also in order to reduce the disparity between interim and final payments.

Inevitably the major factor in the rise in earnings—whereas heading for a fresh record—has been the weakness of the rand, which has boosted domestic revenue from US dollar sales.

In the half year the average US gold price fell 16.6 per cent to \$310 an ounce, whereas the rand equivalent rose 29.9 per cent to R622.

Resultant higher dividends from the gold mine holdings played an important part in lifting Anglo's investment income to R204.4m from R234.7m.

Anglo's net asset value, taking investments at market prices, equalled R32.3 a share on September 30, compared with R40.73 a year earlier.

Dresdner Bank to increase dividend

BY JONATHAN CARR IN FRANKFURT

DRESDNER BANK, West Germany's second biggest bank, will boost operating profits to record levels in 1985 and raise its dividend for the second year in a row.

Mr Wolfgang Roeller, chief executive, also said the bank plans to strengthen its presence in London and Tokyo soon, especially in merchant and investment banking.

Operating profits (which include earnings from own-account trading) of the Dresdner group will rise to "at least" DM 2.5bn (about \$1bn) this year, after slightly more than DM 2bn in 1984.

The parent bank's operating profit would rise by more than one-third, Mr Roeller said. The 1984 figure was newly officially announced but is believed to have been about DM 1.4bn, meaning that this year's result will come close to DM 2bn.

The surge in earnings would allow the bank again to add heavily to its risk provision, especially for foreign currency lending, and to boost the dividend, Mr Roeller said.

For 1984, Dresdner raised its dividend to 15 per cent from 13 per cent.

Dresdner is the last of the "big three" German banks this

week to present results for the first 10 months and give an outlook for the whole year. Both Deutsche Bank and Commerzbank are also heading for record profits, but while the latter promises a "marked" dividend increase the former has indicated that it may stick to its 24 per cent payout.

Dresdner Bank's interest profits rose by 3.3 per cent in the first 10 months, thanks to an increase of 7.5 per cent in business volume and despite a cut in the margin (the difference between interest earned and paid) to 2.6 per cent from 2.7 per cent last year. Earnings from commissions jumped 13.2 per cent.

Detailing plans for expansion abroad, Mr Roeller said, the Dresdner would set up in London both an office for mergers and acquisitions business, and an investment advisory office.

He added that the Dresdner was also negotiating with the Japanese to set up an investment banking operation in Tokyo.

● BIF Bank, the German merchant and commercial bank, raised "partial" operating profit in the first 10 months to DM 123m from DM 103m.

Swiss jam maker to sell petfood side to Nestle

BY JOHN WICKS IN ZURICH

HERO, the Swiss food group, has agreed to sell its petfood subsidiary, Getreideflocken, to Nestle.

Getreideflocken is specialised in petfood but also active in breakfast cereals with a 1984 turnover of more than SF40m (\$19.2m). It is both a manufacturer and an agent for other brands. The company showed a "gratifying" increase in profit for last year.

Nestle entered the petfood market when it recently acquired Carnation of the US, one of the world's leading manufacturers. Getreideflocken already distributes Gloria pet-

food produced by a Carnation subsidiary in France.

Hero's divestment of Getreideflocken, which will continue to produce its Matzinger range of petfoods, is said by the company to be in line with its strategy to concentrate on high quality branded products for human consumption.

Getreideflocken, says Hero, was faced with increasing international competition in the petfood business and would have had to make "disproportionately high investments in research and development" to be successful.

NTT shows ¥171bn profit

By Our Financial Staff

NIPPON TELEGRAPH and Telephone (NTT), the Japanese telecommunications utility, yesterday announced pre-tax profits of ¥171bn (\$948.6m) in the half-year to September—its first accounting period since the change in its status from a state monopoly into a nominally private company.

The ending of NTT's monopoly in the sector formed part of deregulation measures implemented by the Japanese Government from April this year. Full ownership of the company remains in state hands, although a share issue of unspecified size is expected at some stage, possibly next year.

NTT, which has not previously detailed its trading performance, reported sales for the first half of ¥2,520bn. Unconsolidated net profits emerged at ¥75.5bn, and assets at the end of the period were stated as ¥10,760bn.

The company attributed its profitability to sales promotion efforts and cost-cutting.

NTT forecasts full-year profits at ¥292bn pre-tax and ¥133bn net, on sales which are projected to reach more than ¥5,050bn.

Granville & Co. Limited

Member of The National Association of Security Dealers and Investment Managers
8 Lovat Lane London EC3R 8SP Telephone 01-421 1212

Over-the-Counter Market

High	Low	Company	Price	Change	Gross Yield	P/E	Fully Paid
149	121	Ass. Brit. Ind. CULS	121	—	10.0	7.8	—
77	43	Airpassage Group	43	+1	6.4	10.3	12.5
48	28	Arrangements and	28	—	6.3	10.8	5.1
168	108	Bardon Hill	108	+1	4.0	2.4	21.3
64	42	Bay Technologies	42	—	3.9	7.4	6.5
201	144	Ordinary	144	—	12.0	8.8	3.3
152	103	CCL 11pc Conv. Pl.	103	—	15.7	15.2	—
130	10	Carborundum Ord.	10	—	4.5	4.1	5.8
94	83	Carborundum 7.5pc Pl.	83	—	10.7	11.4	—
73	46	Deborah Services	46	—	7.0	11.9	8.0
32	21	Frederick Parker	21	—	—	—	2.9
83	33	George Blair	33	—	—	—	2.9
50	20	Ind. Precision Castings	20	—	3.0	6.0	13.2
218	177	Isa Group	177	—	15.0	8.3	13.8
124	101	Jackman Group	101	—	5.5	8.0	7.4
283	213	James Burrough	213	+3	15.0	5.3	8.9
95	83	James Burrough Spcl.	83	—	12.5	13.8	—
58	71	John Howard and Co.	71	—	5.0	6.3	6.9
225	100	Linguaphone Ord.	100	—	16.0	16.7	—
100	80	Linguaphone 10.5pc	80	—	8.8	1.2	24.9
300	200	Minhouse Holding NV	200	—	6.8	1.2	24.9
120	31	Robert Jenkins	31	—	—	—	20.0
60	28	Scitronics 'A'	28	—	5.0	7.5	3.4
92	81	Torday and Carlisle	81	—	4.3	1.3	18.8
444	320	Trevan Holdings	320	—	2.1	6.3	10.9
40	17	Unicof Holdings	17	—	6.6	7.1	6.8
122	81	Walter Alexander	81	—	17.4	8.7	5.7
247	195	W. S. Yeates	195	—	—	—	—

—Suspended.

GUS THE GREAT UNIVERSAL STORES P.L.C.

Record profits, earnings and dividends

■ The principal activities of the Group are catalogue and telephone ordering, multiple shops, manufacturing, merchandising, finance, property and business information services.

■ Earnings per stock unit increased to 61.49p from 54.14p last year. Dividends total 18p per stock unit (1984: 16p) covered 3.4 times on an historical cost basis.

■ The unaudited results for the first 5 months of the current year show an improvement over the same period last year.

Comparative figures to 31st March

	1985	1984
Turnover (excluding VAT)	2,175,582	2,033,043
Profit before taxation	253,502	228,548
Taxation	99,296	90,810
Retained profit	114,057	96,902
Net current assets	952,258	886,733
Ordinary Stockholders' funds*	1,220,943	1,105,960

*Excluding £280 million surplus on revaluation of trading properties.

GUS owns or trades over 2,500 Mail Order, Retail, Industrial and Investment premises in the UK and Overseas.

Lower deficit forecast by SNCF

By Paul Betts in Paris

SNCF, the French state railways, expect to report a deficit of FF4.4bn (\$618m) next year compared to a deficit of FF7.45bn this year. The railways also said yesterday that it aimed to balance its accounts by 1989.

The group's budget next year will total FF9.6bn to finance a number of projects, including the construction of the new high speed train link with western France costing FF2.1bn. It will also spend FF1.3bn in additional investments to improve security following the series of rail accidents in France this summer.

Restructuring for Fiat's bio-engineering interests

BY JAMES BUXTON IN ROME

FIAT, the leading Italian private sector group, is to transfer its interests in the field of bio-engineering to Snia BPD, the Italian munitions, chemicals and textiles group, in which Fiat already holds a controlling minority stake.

The result of this operation will be that Fiat will increase its stake in Snia BPD from 32 per cent to a little less than 40 per cent. Fiat will henceforth consolidate the turnover of Snia BPD in its own results.

Fiat pointed out yesterday that its bio-engineering operations had strong compatibility

with the advanced research carried out by Snia BPD.

Fiat's interests in bio-engineering are controlled by a Dutch registered company, International Holding Fiat. This owns the whole of Bio-engineering International, which in turn owned 75 per cent of Sorin Biomedica, which specialises in advanced medical equipment. In 1984 the bio-engineering sector had sales of L122bn (\$71.3m).

To absorb Bio-engineering, International Snia BPD, whose sales in 1984 were L2,100bn, will make an increase in capital.

Amsted buyout shelved

BY TERRY DODSWORTH IN NEW YORK

A MANAGEMENT group at Amsted Industries, the Chicago conglomerate, has abandoned its initial attempts to mount a \$500m leveraged buyout for the company, but says that it is trying to organise an alternative plan to take the group private.

No reason for the change in the takeover plans was given, although it was confirmed that several law suits alleging self-dealing on the part of the executives involved in the scheme had been launched.

The group said that a new bank had offered to lead a

fresh consortium to raise funds for the alternative deal, but warned that financing was not yet assured, and that it was not certain that a new buyout would eventually be proposed to shareholders.

Shares in Amsted, a construction and building materials group, rose following the original buyout announcement to \$48, compared to a value of between \$48 and \$50 put on the package of cash and debentures offered by the management group. They have since fallen to \$45.

PAF plans \$26m rights issue

PAF, the Italian conglomerate which is negotiating the purchase of a near 12 per cent shareholding in Montedison, the big chemicals group, plans to make a rights issue before the end of the year, writes Our Financial Staff.

The share issue will raise around L45bn (\$26.3m) and will help finance the Montedison share purchase.

PAF, with interests in ship-building, paint and finance, hopes to buy the chemical group's shares for around L315bn.

The funding proposals were unveiled yesterday by Mr Gianni Varasi, head of PAF who was in London to meet City institutions. He said PAF profits for 1985 would total L44bn net, an increase of 30 per cent.

G.B.C. Capital Ltd

at 31st October 1985

was

£52.23

The net asset value after contingent Capital Gains Tax was

£52.17

The net asset value

LONDON TRADED OPTIONS

CALLS							PUTS						
Option	Jan.	Apr.	July	Jan.	Apr.	July	Option	Jan.	Apr.	July	Jan.	Apr.	July
B.P. ('870)	500	85	80	—	9	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	550	85	80	65	10	25	53	—	—	—	—	—	—
	600	11	20	37	57	65	57	—	—	—	—	—	—
Coms. Gold ('601)	450	57	70	84	9	22	53	—	—	—	—	—	—
	500	30	42	52	37	47	55	—	—	—	—	—	—
	550	14	22	34	67	77	63	—	—	—	—	—	—
	600	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Courtside ('194)	140	56	60	65	1	1	1 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—
	160	56	40	44	1	5	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
	180	18	26	39	4	4	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
	200	4	14	15	1	10	19	—	—	—	—	—	—
Com. Union ('233)	200	40	48	59	1 1/2	2 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	220	24	28	35	4	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—
	240	12	21	25	18	17	19	—	—	—	—	—	—
	260	6	11	25	25	25	25	—	—	—	—	—	—
Distillers ('511)	200	55	78	90	9	13	14	—	—	—	—	—	—
	500	58	52	70	25	25	35	—	—	—	—	—	—
	550	15	25	25	48	60	58	—	—	—	—	—	—
G.E.O. ('176)	140	38	44	36	—	3	7	—	—	—	—	—	—
	160	20	16	16	2	3	16	—	—	—	—	—	—
	200	5	6	—	28	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Grand Met. ('588)	350	65	70	85	2	4	4	—	—	—	—	—	—
	360	40	46	85	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	390	17	37	38	14	30	25	—	—	—	—	—	—
I.C.I. ('111)	600	130	157	147	1 1/2	4	8	—	—	—	—	—	—
	650	40	54	105	9	22	27	—	—	—	—	—	—
	700	40	54	65	22	40	47	—	—	—	—	—	—
	750	16	25	35	90	—	70	—	—	—	—	—	—
	800	4	—	—	90	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Land Sec. ('219)	200	68	45	—	—	1 1/2	4	—	—	—	—	—	—
	280	35	45	—	—	1 1/2	4	—	—	—	—	—	—
	300	11	17	28	9	25	27	—	—	—	—	—	—
	330	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Marks & Sp. ('184)	180	57	62	—	1	2	1 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—
	190	40	40	—	1	2	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
	200	28	33	37	1 1/2	1 1/2	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
	220	15	19	21	9	11	11	—	—	—	—	—	—
	240	3 1/2	9	14	19	23	24	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shell Trans. ('663)	850	38	50	62	12	25	30	—	—	—	—	—	—
	700	12	18	35	48	85	60	—	—	—	—	—	—
	750	5	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trans' Gas Hse ('506)	300	36	45	58	1 1/2	6	9	—	—	—	—	—	—
	400	20	20	40	11	15	20	—	—	—	—	—	—
	430	7 1/2	16	32	34	35	36	—	—	—	—	—	—
Option	Feb.	May	Aug.	Feb.	May	Aug.	Option	Feb.	May	Aug.	Feb.	May	Aug.
BAT Inds ('251)	290	52	48	—	5	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	300	28	28	27	13	18	25	—	—	—	—	—	—
	320	14	18	25	55	60	35	—	—	—	—	—	—
	340	4	10	10	65	60	40	—	—	—	—	—	—
Berolays ('452)	350	108	112	—	9	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	360	75	62	—	7	7	10	—	—	—	—	—	—
	380	55	60	70	15	15	80	—	—	—	—	—	—
	400	35	32	48	25	27	48	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brit. Gas ('461)	350	132	128	—	1	1 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	360	102	108	80	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—
	400	42	57	65	13	23	28	—	—	—	—	—	—
	500	20	28	40	38	43	47	—	—	—	—	—	—
Btrfalecom ('308)	160	48	36	41	0 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	180	28	18	25	7	9	12	—	—	—	—	—	—
	200	12	18	26	3	15	18	—	—	—	—	—	—
	220	4 1/2	9	14	37	19	22	—	—	—	—	—	—
Imperial Gr. ('245)	160	93	78	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	180	55	66	82	4	4	9	—	—	—	—	—	—
	200	35	52	67	13	17	18	—	—	—	—	—	—
	220	26	31	37	15	17	18	—	—	—	—	—	—
LARNO ('228)	840	30	30	48	94	27	28	—	—	—	—	—	—
	860	16	23	30	43	43	43	—	—	—	—	—	—
	880	9	16	30	55	55	57	—	—	—	—	—	—
	900	4	11	27	66	66	66	—	—	—	—	—	—
LOWRHO ('190)	140	54	56	38	2 1/2	1 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	160	38	38	25	3 1/2	3 1/2	5 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—
	180	18	20	24	7	11	12	—	—	—	—	—	—
	200	9	11 1/2	12	12	11	12	—	—	—	—	—	—
Option	Feb.	May	Aug.	Feb.	May	Aug.	Option	Feb.	May	Aug.	Feb.	May	Aug.
P. & O. ('452)	350	108	—	—	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	420	78	62	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	480	52	57	88	6	11	15	—	—	—	—	—	—
	560	26	27	57	18	27	30	—	—	—	—	—	—
Real ('150)	120	28	36	48	3	8	7	—	—	—	—	—	—
	130	26	36	48	3	9	12	—	—	—	—	—	—
	140	20	24	34	6	9	12	—	—	—	—	—	—
	150	17	18	24	11	12	15	—	—	—	—	—	—
	180	6	9	—	22	38	39	—	—	—	—	—	—
R.T.Z. ('832)	500	46	57	70	15	21	26	—	—	—	—	—	—
	550	24	39	45	35	47	55	—	—	—	—	—	—
	600	9	20	20	77	80	70	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vanl Reefs ('650)	60	13 1/2	16	17 1/2	3 1/2	5 1/2	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
	80	2	6	—	14	16 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	90	1 1/2	—	—	22 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ex 102 1989 ('297)	25	1 1/2	1 1/2	—	0 1/2	0 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	25	0 1/2	0 1/2	—	0 1/2	0 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	25	0 1/2	0 1/2	—	0 1/2	0 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tr. 1122 1881 ('2103)	102	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	104	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	110	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tr. 1122 05/87 ('2111)	108	3 1/2	3 1/2	4 1/2	0 1/2	0 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	112	0 1/2	0 1/2	1 1/2	1	1 1/2	2 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—
	114	0 1/2	0 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	2 1/2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Option	Dec.	Mar.	June	Dec.	Mar.	June	Option	Dec.	Mar.	June	Dec.	Mar.	June
STR ('975)	150	38	36	60	—	15	22	—	—	—	—	—	—
	175	18	23	30	30	30	20	—	—	—	—	—	—
	200	6	23	30	30	30	20	—	—	—	—	—	—
Beecham ('321)	280	45	55	60	2	6	8	—	—	—	—	—	—
	300	22	27	48	6	13	20	—	—	—	—	—	—
	320	18	27	48	6	13	20	—	—	—	—	—	—
	350	5	13	—	14	43	45	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bess ('649)	550	125	142	160	2	4	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
	600	75	92	110	2	6	10	—	—	—	—	—	—
	650	45	58	82	2	8	10	—	—	—	—	—	—
	700	9	9	30	42	47	47	—	—	—	—	—	—
De Beers ('64,80)	420	80	100	110	5	8	28	—	—	—	—	—	—
	460	53	75	90	12	30	37	—	—	—	—	—	—
	500	35	55	85	20	50	60	—	—	—	—	—	—
	550	8	27	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
GKN ('581)	240	28	41	43	1 1/2	5	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
	260	11	22	31	2	15	15	—	—	—	—	—	—
	280	5	12	21	8	15	30	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gleco ('1560)	1400	180	240	270	9	22	25	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1420	150	200	239	15	25	45	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1450	85	165	200	25	40	65	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1500	55	155	210	42	70	75	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hanson ('208)	180	32	38	47	1 1/2	4	7	—	—	—	—	—	—
	195	19	—	—	2 1/2	9	13	—	—	—	—	—	—
	200	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	215	8	—	—	11	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	230	—	16 1/2	22	—	—	22	—	—	—	—	—	—
	235	—	—	28	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Jaguar													

Large sales

[illegible]

Ordinarily
990.6, the
526.3, and
to 1462.6
to 947.2,
any sub
tell chie
t, mark

[illegible]

Nov. 28

1	53
2	44
3	28
4	34
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6	63
7	11
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18	103
+ or -	
19	+6
20	+20
21	+20
22	+8
23	+6
24	-15
25	+10
26	5
27	-30
28	-18
29	13
30	15
31	-20
32	+2
33	-3
34	5
35	+10
36	+20
37	-3
38	-4
39	-10
40	-20
41	+2
42	-4
43	+12
44	+360
45	-4
46	5
47	-1
48	+20
49	-10
50	-
51	+6
52	-8
53	+3

97-1-39

	+ or -
.....	-3
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.....	+3
.....	+1
.....	+9
.....	+10
.....	-1
.....	-0.02
.....	+0.04
.....	-0.06
.....	-0.05
.....	-0.02
.....	-0.02
.....	-0.04
.....	-0.04
.....	-0.04
.....	-0.01
.....	-0.05
.....	-0.02
.....	+0.05
.....	-0.09
.....	-0.01
.....	+0.02
.....	-0.34
.....	-0.25
.....	-0.2
.....	+0.5
.....	+0.1
.....	+0.76
.....	+1
.....	-0.26
.....	-0.3

4,010	-40
493	+1
1,070	-30

[illegible][illegible]

Takeover speculation helps equities recoup early falls

Account Dealing Dates

*First Declared Last Account
Dealings close Dealings Day
Nov 11 Nov 21 Nov 22 Dec 2
Nov 23 Dec 3 Dec 6 Dec 16
Dec 9 Dec 19 Dec 20 Jan 6
New-time dealings may take
place from 9.30 am two business days
after.

Another flurry of takeover speculation brought a more volatile week in London equities to a firm close yesterday. Once again it was the high-charged Stores sector which came under the scrutiny of short-term investors. An hour or so after the opening a drab trading session was enlivened by a spate of buying orders for British Home Stores. Speculation arose that Sears was ready to scupper the proposed merger with Habitat 67.

The sector, which is also currently benefiting from hopes of a record Christmas spending spree, surged higher. BHS naturally led the movement but several other stocks, including Biscuits, also showed gains. BHS settled 18p at 4.32p, after touching 4.58p, for a rise on the week of 5p.

Restrained by the lack of a lead from Wall Street, closing on Thursday for the Thanksgiving Day holiday, other sector leaders joined in the advance. Imperial Group, currently in merger negotiations with United Biscuits, was one of the day's most active stocks being helped by a large volume of business in futures. Options among second-line issues, Blundell-Permeagize featured prominently as Reed International countered the original offer from the overseas AKZO group; the market was relishing the prospect of a keen takeover battle.

Measuring the overall trend of the equity market, the FT Ordinary share index was down nearly a point at 10.45 am but it rallied thereafter to close a net 9.9 up on the session at 1142.9, only 4 points short of Monday's all-time peak of 1148.9. The FT-SE 100 share index performed much the same to end 9.8 higher at 1439.1, after 1427.5. The basis of allotment for the Laura Ashley offer-for-sale showed that applications had totalled 1,512m shares, attracting some £2.04bn, for the 46.5m shares on offer.

The exchange rate's fresh rise against the dollar made little impression on gilt-edged stocks. The absorption, on Wednesday, of the authorities' latest £1bn offering of new stock seemed to have left investors short of funds and sporadic small sales brought a slightly easier tone. Exchequer 10p per cent Convertible 1989 lost its opening day premium to settle at par in £40-penny form.

Life insurers firm
Life insurers made fresh progress following news of Standard Life's excellent new business figures. A broker's favourable circular also encour-

aged buyers. Legal and General rose 17 to 77p and Prudential advanced 19 to 807p, while Britannia firm 6 to 833p. Composites were also firm with Sun Alliance noteworthy for gain of 8 at 655p. Commercial Union rose 2 to 236p. Lloyd's broker Hogg Robinson put on 5 to 284p as takeover speculation revived.

The major clearing banks featured Midland, 10 higher at 448p in the wake of call option business. Barclays firm 8 to 459p. Elsewhere, Royal Bank of Scotland rose 4 to 292p following Press comment.

Distillers buying recently on hopes that Argyll Group will launch its much-heralded bid for RBS, then also said to be showing interest in the group but this was later officially denied.

Leading Building issues traded quietly and settled a few pence easier. Blue Circle softened a couple of pence to 875p, as did Tarmac, to 388p. RMC shed 4 to 498p and BPS Industries eased 3 to 372p. Elsewhere, John Laing, 12p higher at 112p, followed the company's decision to withdraw staff from Saudi Arabia because of payment problems, rallied 3 to 325p. SGB, the subject of a bid from BBT, gained 6 to 265p following the sale of 57.5% to the Australian scaffolding subsidiary for £4.5m.

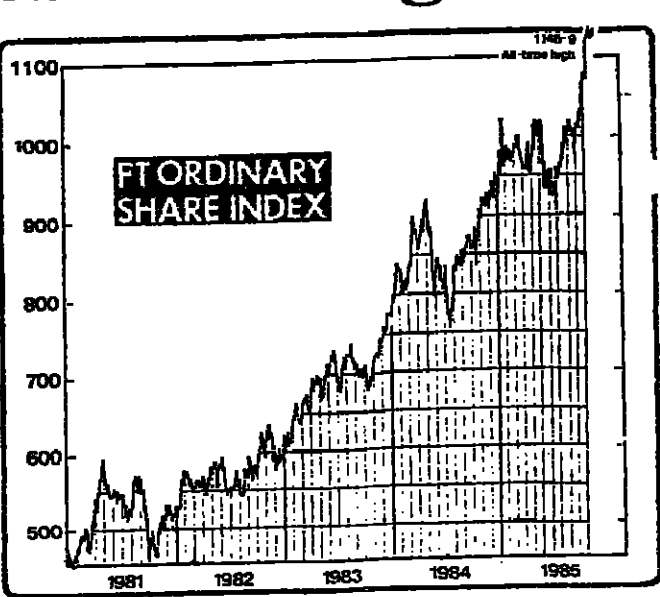
Among Paints, the bids by Alzo and Reed International for Blundell-Permeagize excited Johnstones Paints which gained 12 to 55p.

Currency influences restrained ICI which settled 3 cheaper at 717p, after 714p. Elsewhere in the Chemical sector, British Benzol continued to reflect "shell operation" hopes and gained 3p more to 38p.

GUS wanted
Enthusiasm for British Home Stores spread to the leading Retailer GUS A rose 13 to 905p, aided by the chairman's statement at the annual meeting, while Freeman put on 10 at 394p. Gratian, 18p dearer at 396p, made fresh headway in the wake of a bullish circular from bankers Wood Mackenzie. W. L. Smith, 4, also the subject of a broker's recommendation, improved 3 for a week's advance of 30 to 316p. Elsewhere, revived interest was noted in Ladies Pride, 3 up at 51p, and Macmillan, 4 to the good at 79p.

Press comment lifted Peters Stores 6 to 78p, after 78p, but fading bid hopes clipped 8 from Gabicci, at 120p.

Among Shoes and Leather issues, Mearlam Sims and



FT Ordinary Share Index

Coggin gave up 3 to 33p after the first-half figures.

Leading Electricals were improved 7 to 432p and Plessey a couple of pence at 188p, while the occasional movements elsewhere in the sector, Micro Bio moved ahead late to end 12p higher at 48p. First Castle continued to make headway at 112p, up 4, while Logica were up 4 to a new low for the year of 85p.

Interest in the Engineering sector centred on secondary issues where Spencer Clark Metal Industries, already a good market, moved further ahead in the late dealings, to 102p, after 101p on news of a bid approach from Metal Industries. Press mention helped Stothert and Pitt improve 188p, up 5, while Trafalgar House bid hopes lifted Davy Corporation 6 to 117p. Babcock, bought earlier in the week on talk of a US or Hanson stock stake build-up, hardened 2 to 186p. Mollins reacted 5 to 172p on the announcement that ICP Securities holds a 9.2 per cent stake in the company, while T. J. Ross 10 to 408p as hopes of a bid from Evered revived.

The emphasis in Foods switched to Retailers and ASDA-MFI featured with a rise of 10 at 185p, after 180p, amid talk of a bid from either Dees Corporate or Marks and Spencer. Dec, with interim results due next Thursday, gained 13 to 255p. Elsewhere, Cadbury Schweppes attracted further buying interest and added 3 to 179p, while Rowntree Macintosh hardened a couple of pence to 102p. Press suggestions of a possible bid from Avana stimulated Bassett, 5 higher at 183p. Blue Bird were a like amount better at 70p and Needlers improved 3 to 162p. Harlewood remained at 58p, while market and rose a further 22 to 350p.

Blundell-Permeagize again
Blundell-Permeagize attracted considerable attention and finally settled 22 higher at 188p, after 205p, this followed a rise of 20p per share after a 153p cash or share exchange alternative from Reed International; the latter closed 5 cheaper at 710p. Erskine House responded to bumper interim figures with a rise of 13 to 145p, while occasional demand lifted British Aerospace 11 to 481p. Rolfe and Nolan, in contrast, fell 7 to 81p on the half-year loss, while recent speculative counter English China Clays drifted back 5 to 295p in the absence of any developments. Dalgety, a poor market recently on the tin crisis, staged a noteworthy rally and closed 18 higher at 475p. Talk of a brokers-renting bid for British Aerospace advanced 8 to 61p. Speculative activity continued in Metal Closures, up 5 more to 232p, while Pearson rose 7 further to 420p. Leading miscellane-

ness over the outlook for crude oil prices led to renewed weakness in the leaders at the outset of trading. However, "cheap" buyers were quickly on the scene and the top quality issues ended the day with modest gains on balance.

Initially fell to 585p but rallied to close a couple of pence better at 570p, while Shell hardened to 665p. Britoil closed a net 5 firmer at 225p, after dipping to 215p early on. Enterprize Oil touched a 1985 low of 154p prior to settling only marginally easier on the day at 156p while LASMO, still reflecting takeover hopes, dipped to a year's low of 225p before steadying and closing a few pence down at 228p. Secondary oils remained on the defensive with one or two exceptions. Carless Capel, following the announcement of interim figures in mid-week, rallied strongly amid talk of a possible bid from Coalite and touched 111p prior to ending the session 10 firmer at 105p. Industrial Scottish Energy were marked down 10p in the wake of the proposed two-for-five rights issue at 120p a share. Firstland Oil & Gas came under renewed selling pressure in early trading and fell away to a 1985 low of 65p before providing more to 65p in front of next Tuesday's full-year figures.

An active business again developed among Tobacco. Imperial Group attracted substantial US support and revived a favourable outlook, coupled with persistent Traded Option demand lifted the shares 6 more to 244p, after 247p. United Biscuits, currently involved in merger negotiations with Impsa, eased the tempo to 275p, after 280p, following a chart "sell" recommendation, also responded to Traded Option activity and rallied 12 to 288p.

Financials usually made modest headway. M&I improved a few pence to 385p following a favourable outlook, while Excess International hardened 4 to 217p. Aitken Hume, down to 169p at one stage, rallied to close 2 dearer on balance at 177p, while Ireland's Silvermines continued to benefit from the proposed funding of oil prospects and advanced 4 to record a two-day rise of 8 at 134p. Ex-Lands, buoyant on Thursday following a sizeable put-through in the company's shares, dipped to 20p as the directors attempted to defuse the situation, but later settled at 30p, a net gain of 2, on news that Cleves Investments controls just over 5 per cent of the equity. Robert Kitchen advanced 10 to 195p following the agreed shares and cash offer from Scottish Heritage Trust, unchanged at 114p.

Carless rally
Thursday's sell-off in the oil sector and continuing nervous-

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Golds down again
A combination of a firm showing by sterling against the dollar and a late decline in the bullion price caused a further decline in South African Gold shares. Buitl edged up to around 387.5 during the morning but subsequently drifted back to end the day net 8.5 easier at 389.0.

Golds opened on a mixed note but gradually gave ground as the metal price eased and the Rand rate fell back after an initial improvement. Sterling quotations were obviously unsettled by the pound bid on a much smaller scale. The Gold Mines index dipped 3.1 more to 255.8, extending the decline over the past four days to one of 23.8.

In the leading Golds, Randfontein slipped 1.1 to 594.1, South African Gold Mines 1.2 to 591.1, while East Rand Consolidated, 25 off at 750p, or Hartbeest, a few pence off at 272p.

South African Financials were quietly steady but London-domiciled issues rallied after an uncertain opening.

SE DEALINGS

STERLING ISSUES BY FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Issue	Price
Asian Devt. Bk. 10/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
Australia (Comm. on) 9/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
European Inv. Bk. 10/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
Finland (Rep. of) 11/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
Inter-Am. Devt. Bk. 9/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
Int'l Bk. for Rec. and Dev. 9/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
Ireland 12/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
Malaysia 12/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
New Zealand 11/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
OECD 10/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
South African Govt. 10/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
Sweden 10/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
Switzerland 10/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432
World Bank 10/dec/85 2012 432	2012 432

CORP STOCKS

Company	Price
London County 20/12/85 1000 432	1000 432
Greater London Council 8/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Birmingham 31/12/85 111p 2012 432	2012 432
British Telecom 20/12/85 111p 2012 432	2012 432
British Airways 20/12/85 111p 2012 432	2012 432
British Petroleum 20/12/85 111p 2012 432	2012 432
British Steel 20/12/85 111p 2012 432	2012 432
British Airways 20/12/85 111p 2012 432	2012 432
British Petroleum 20/12/85 111p 2012 432	2012 432
British Steel 20/12/85 111p 2012 432	2012 432

UK PUBLIC BONDS

Issue	Price
1985-86 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1986-87 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1987-88 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1988-89 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1989-90 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1990-91 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1991-92 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1992-93 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1993-94 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1994-95 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432

COMMONWEALTH GOVT.

Issue	Price
1985-86 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1986-87 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1987-88 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1988-89 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1989-90 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1990-91 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1991-92 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1992-93 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1993-94 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1994-95 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432

FOREIGN STOCKS

Country	Price
Canada 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
France 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Germany 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Italy 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Japan 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Spain 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Sweden 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Switzerland 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
USA 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
UK 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432

STERLING ISSUES BY OVERSEAS BORROWERS

Issue	Price
1985-86 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1986-87 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1987-88 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1988-89 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1989-90 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1990-91 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1991-92 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1992-93 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1993-94 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
1994-95 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432

BANKS, DISCOUNT

Bank	Price
Bank of America 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Bank of England 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Bank of France 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Bank of Germany 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Bank of Italy 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Bank of Japan 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Bank of Spain 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Bank of Sweden 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Bank of Switzerland 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432
Bank of the USA 10/dec/85 1000 432	1000 432

NEW HIGHS AND LOWS FOR 1985

Category	High	Low
BANKS (2)	1000 432	1000 432
BRITISH (1)	1000 432	1000 432
EUROPEAN (1)	1000 432	1000 432
AMERICAN (1)	1000 432	1000 432
ASIAN (1)	1000 432	1000 432
AUSTRALIAN (1)	1000 432	1000 432
AFRICAN (1)	1000 432	1000 432
OCEANIC (1)	1000 432	1000 432
COMMONWEALTH (1)	1000 432	1000 432
INTERNATIONAL (1)	1000 432	1000 432
OVERSEAS (1)	1000 432	1000 432
STERLING (1)	1000 432	1000 432
DISCOUNT (1)	1000 432	1000 432
NEW HIGHS (36)	1000 432	1000 432
NEW LOWS (36)	1000 432	1000 432
BREWERIES (1)	1000 432	1000 432
TEXTILES (1)	1000 432	1000 432
TRADING (1)	1000 432	1000 432
INDUSTRIALS (1)	1000 432	1000 432
MOTORS (1)	1000 432	1000 432
PLANTATIONS (1)	1000 432	1000 432
MINES (1)	1000 432	1000 432
SHIPPING (1)	1000 432	1000 432
NEW HIGHS (82)	1000 432	1000 432
NEW LOWS (82)	1000 432	1000 432

RISES AND FALLS YESTERDAY

Category	Rises	Falls
British Funds	1000 432	1000 432
Foreign Bonds	1000 432	1000 432
Industrial	1000 432	1000 432
Financial	1000 432	1000 432
Oil	1000 432	1000 432
Metals	1000 432	1000 432
Others	1000 432	1000 432
Totals	1000 432	1000 432

YESTERDAY'S ACTIVE STOCKS

Stock	Price
British Funds	1000 432
Foreign Bonds	1000 432
Industrial	1000 432
Financial	1000 432
Oil	1000 432
Metals	1000 432
Others	1000 432
Totals	1000 432

THURSDAY'S ACTIVE STOCKS

Stock	Price
British Funds	1000 432
Foreign Bonds	1000 432
Industrial	1000 432
Financial	1000 432
Oil	1000 432
Metals	1000 432
Others	1000 432
Totals	1000 432

5-DAY ACTIVE STOCKS

Stock	Price
British Funds	1000 432
Foreign Bonds	1000 432
Industrial	1000 432
Financial	1000 432
Oil	1000 432
Metals	1000 432
Others	1000 432
Totals	1000 432

FINANCIAL TIMES STOCK INDICES

Index	Nov. 26	Nov. 27	Nov. 28	Nov. 29	Nov. 30	Year
Government Secs.	85.81	85.90	85.95	85.95	85.95	85.85
Fixed Interest	86.38	86.46	86.55	86.55	86.55	86.11
Ordinary	1142.9	1143.0	1143.0	1143.0	1143.0	1143.0
Gold Mines	285.8	285.9	286.0	286.0	286.0	284.5
Ord. Div. Yield	4.30	4.32	4.30	4.32	4.30	4.28
Earnings, Div./Yield	10.68	10.74	10.70	10.76	10.65	10.25
P/E Ratio (net)	11.55	11.49	11.52	11.46	11.55	10.63
Total Returns (Est.)	28.16	28.09	28.21	28.14	28.20	28.04
Equity turnover (m)	652.58	653.24	653.96	654.94	654.94	654.00
Equity bargains (m)	25.324	27.868	34.627	35.380	36.689	15.165
Shares traded (m)	287.2	280.7	300.4	300.3	329.1	154.2

10 am 1132.2, 11 am 1137.8, Noon 1140.3, 1 pm 1139.2, 2 pm 1141.5, 3 pm 1141.7, 4 pm 1141.2, Day's High 1143.8, Day's Low 1132.2, Basis 100, Govt. Secs. 15/10/78, Fixed Int. 1928, Old navy 17/35, Gold Mines 12/9/55, SE Activity 1974, Latest Index 01-248 8028, *Nil = 11.14.

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AUTHORISED UNIT TRUSTS & INSURANCES

<p>Unit Trusts</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 2211</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 2211</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 2211</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 2211</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 2211</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 2211</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 2211</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 2211</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 2211</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 2211</p> <p>AA Friendly Society AA Friendly Society Ltd 21 St Andrew St, Edinburgh 01-225 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Financial Times Saturday November 30 1985

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Recent Issues and Rights Page 24
This service is available to every company that is on Stock Exchange throughout the United Kingdom for a fee of £200 per annum for each security.

France tests steel aid limits

By David Housgo in Paris

THE FRENCH Government yesterday pushed up against the limits of the EEC's clamp-down on steel subsidies with a two-year FFR 20bn (£1.75bn) aid programme for its troubled steel producers.

Sacilor and Usinor, the two French state-owned steel groups, will be provided with new capital in the shape of bond issues to which the government is the only subscriber. Some FFR 10bn will be paid by the end of this year, with a further FFR 4bn next year and FFR 6bn in 1987.

The plan is expected to be scrutinised closely in Brussels because the Community's steel code rules out the payment of operating subsidies beyond the end of this year. It allows payments for cutting production capacity in 1986 but after that steel producers should be self-supporting.

European Commission officials in Brussels yesterday described the French plan as "borderline" but suspended final judgement until they had seen the full proposals.

France is trying to balance the obligation to abide by Community rules with limitations on government spending which prevent it paying out the full FFR 20bn before the Community deadline.

Under yesterday's proposals Sacilor will receive FFR 12.8bn and Usinor FFR 7.8bn. The division reflects the government's decision to give priority to upgrading Usinor's large coastal flat products rolling mill at Dunkerque. Sacilor, the higher cost producer based in Lorraine in eastern France, had been hoping for FFR 15bn of the FFR 20bn of funds.

The convertible bonds to be issued by the two groups will be subscribed to by the government's steel industry intervention fund (Fonds d'Intervention Siderurgique) and carry a minimal interest rate of about 0.1 per cent.

An initial FFR 10bn — split evenly between the two groups — will be used to write off part of their existing debt before the end of the year.

In 1986 Sacilor will be able to draw on FFR 3.5bn of the bond and Usinor FFR 700m. The following year Sacilor will draw a further FFR 4.5bn and Usinor FFR 1.5bn.

Sacilor will be expected to cover out of the funds allocated to it the losses of Unimetal and Ascometal, the engineering and special steel subsidiaries jointly owned by the two groups and managed by Sacilor.

The two French groups expect to run up combined losses this year of about FFR 7bn.

The EEC is already investigating the sharp fall in European steel prices.

French prices where markets for some key products have been sluggish for several months, are among the lowest in Europe.

British steel industry officials say the country's producers have been maintaining output and selling surpluses elsewhere in the EEC, pulling down prices, particularly in the UK and West Germany.

Ofotel to review BT pricing policy

BY GUY DE JONQUIERES

THE OFFICE of Telecommunications (Ofotel) has launched a review of British Telecom's pricing policies in response to public complaints about the size of its recent tariff increases.

Professor Bryan Carsberg, Ofotel's director-general, said Dr Oonagh McDonald, MP for Thurrock and Labour's spokesman on Treasury and Civil Service affairs, in a letter that he is considering how far he can apply more public pressure on BT's future policy.

He did not expect to be able to force BT to revoke tariff changes already in effect. Ofotel has already approved BT's latest tariff, averaging 3.7 per cent on a range of inland services.

which took effect on November 1.

But Prof Carsberg indicated yesterday that the review might lead Ofotel to publish more detailed guidelines for applying the regulatory formula governing BT's tariff increases.

If the formula were found not to be working properly, he would consider amending it in future by making a reference to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

He also expected to make such a reference to settle the terms on which BT's prices would be regulated after 1989, when the present five-year arrangements are due to expire. BT refused to comment on his remarks yesterday.

Prof Carsberg said in his letter to Dr McDonald that renegotiation of the arrangements in 1989 was "an important opportunity to pass on to consumers the benefits of additional efficiencies gained in telecommunications operations."

The existing tariff formula limits the average annual rise in BT's charges for most inland services to 3 percentage points below the rate of retail price inflation. But it allows much higher increases for individual services.

On November 1 BT raised prices of some services by more than 9 per cent, but lowered others. Ofotel has received many complaints that the increases were excessive in

view of BT's high profits, which rose 39 per cent in the three months to the end of June, compared with the same period a year before.

BT's return on capital was not exceptionally high by the standards of other large British companies, said Prof Carsberg. But the Ofotel review would consider what to do if the tariff formula ever permitted a rise to unacceptable levels in BT's rate of return.

The review would also cover the "re-balancing" of BT's tariffs to meet competition. Ofotel would not allow BT to carry to unreasonable lengths its policy of raising residential charges while lowering prices for profitable business services.

Sinclair seeking £10m after pre-tax loss

BY JASON CRISP

SINCLAIR RESEARCH, the troubled home computer company, is seeking £10m in external finance after a pre-tax loss of £18.3m in the year to March. Sales, at £102.8m, were 32 per cent up on the previous year, when it had made a pre-tax profit of £14.3m.

Sir Clive Sinclair, founder and chairman, said the company's financial adviser, N M Rothschild, was trying to raise the money, which is needed for working capital and new product launches next year. He said he expected investors would be a combination of organisations and wealthy individuals.

In addition Sir Clive said he was close to raising over £5m from a group of venture capi-

talists for a new company to make wafer scale integration semiconductors. This ambitious project, first suggested earlier in the year, is to put together a large number of microchips on a single piece of silicon.

Sinclair Research will have a stake in the company, and the deal is expected to be concluded near Christmas, Sir Clive said. Initial production would be subcontracted and the company would have to raise substantial sums when it started its own production, probably in three years' time.

The delayed accounts received by shareholders yesterday show the company made a small operating profit of £4m. The losses resulted from excep-

tional items of £22.7m, mainly substantial write-downs on stocks.

Like its competitor Acorn Computers, Sinclair ran into serious financial trouble earlier this year because of very high stocks and little from retailers who were left with large numbers of home computers.

The subsequent price war has meant Sinclair has had to write down its stocks by £17.5m. Even so stocks were still put at £21.3m at the year end. Completed products accounted for almost £20m of that — more than double the previous year.

In addition Sinclair Research has made provisions of £3.7m for surplus commitments to buy components and £1.6m for

debts owed it by Prism, the home computer distributor which collapsed earlier this year.

Sir Clive refused to predict sales for this financial year. Although the company says it has increased its market share in the UK to over 50 per cent, sales will be substantially lower this year. He estimated the overall UK market for home computers in 1985 at 1m to 1.1m units compared with 1.4m last year.

Since the retailers bought 1.8m home computers from the manufacturers in 1984, their requirements are likely only to be for 700,000 this year — and at much lower prices.

Background, Page 4

Singapore faces collapse of public company

BY CHRIS SHERWELL IN SINGAPORE

SINGAPORE faces the prospect of its first ever collapse of a public company following the failure yesterday of bank creditors of Pan-Electric Industries and a key shareholder to agree the final terms of a rescue for the debt-ridden company, until recently a favourite of speculators on Singapore's Stock Exchange.

The affair, at the heart of a 10-day crisis which has already made deep inroads into stock market confidence, is expected to provide a pretext for greater government regulation of the Singapore market, Asia's third biggest after Tokyo and Hong Kong, since it has thrown into jeopardy the survival of several local stockbroking firms.

Pan-Electric, an industrial and property company, has debts of at least S\$400m (£129.4m).

The Straits Times industrial index shed a further 3.62 points yesterday to a three-year low of 691.81 — a level still artificially buoyed by the current suspension of trading in Pan-Electric shares, which form one

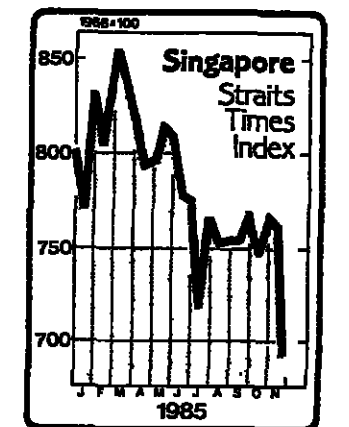
of the 30 components of the index.

The Pan-Electric crisis has also affected James Capel, the London broker. It is believed to have paid S\$37m to one Singapore securities firm after Pan-Electric failed to stand by a guarantee on a transaction arranged by that firm.

It has been discovered that Pan-Electric had committed itself to guaranteeing forward dealings in its own shares and those of some associated companies on a scale which remains unknown. Capel is understood to have been caught in the middle of a three-way transaction involving the local broker and Orange Grove Property, a Pan-Electric subsidiary.

The local broker is believed to have been one party in this deal while the other reneged, although ostensibly backed by Pan-Electric. In London, Capel executives described the exposure of their firm as a "minor involvement."

In addition to local stockbrokers, another Singapore listed company has been put at



risk by the crisis. Shares in Growth Industrial Holdings were suspended on November 19 along with those of Pan-Electric, in which it has a 31.6 per cent stake.

This followed the apparent failure by Pan-Electric to meet a S\$7.5m debt repayment the previous day. Trading was also suspended in Sigma International — another Singapore company, through which Mr

Tan Koon Swan, a Malaysian entrepreneur and politician, holds a 22.6 per cent stake in Pan-Electric.

Since then, a series of meetings between Pan-Electric's 30 bank creditors, most of them foreign, and advisers to Mr Tan have failed to secure a bail-out.

The Monetary Authority of Singapore, the powerful regulatory agency for the country's financial markets, stepped in and had brought about an agreement in principle between the banks and Mr Tan.

However, disagreements among the banks — notably between those with secured loans and those without — added to a common nervousness over the state of the company as more information surfaced on forward share contracts and its cash flow position.

Forward transactions in Pan-Electric shares have been undertaken for at least a year, and are likely to prove difficult to fill. Its share price plummeted to S\$1.46 at the suspension from a peak of S\$3.36.

Youth finds industry boring

In Sussex we would be sitting on the beach.

Professor John Constable, director-general of the British Institute of Management, weighed in with reminiscences of requiring a large car to take his children to university, so burdened are they by hi-fi equipment and clothes. Even if there was an anti-industrial culture, he said, there was no propensity not

to consume industry's fruits.

The survey itself showed the image of industry among children was "depressingly poor." Managers were seen as much less useful than doctors, teachers, soldiers and even — a gleam came into Lord Plowden's eyes — civil servants.

Of those who wanted to work in industry, most wanted to work in advertis-

ing — especially those who went to private schools and who were going on to higher education.

Forced to think of making things rather than cajoling people to buy them, they thought of aerospace as interesting, telephones and telecommunications as a little less interesting, publishing as quite interesting, chemicals as not too dull, car manu-

facturing as pretty dull, bread and cake-making as dull, mining as desperately tedious and packaging as including a catastrophic trace.

The survey also found that our children are a "sexist" bunch, with boys very keen on cars, computers as a career and girls not really keen at all: girls were attracted to clothing and footwear (making it).

Italy may back Westland rescue

BY JAMES BUXTON IN ROME AND BRIDGET BLOOM IN LONDON

THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT is prepared to give financial backing to efforts by Agusta, the 90 per cent state-owned national helicopter manufacturer, to take a stake in Westland, the troubled British helicopter company.

Italy's defence industry committee, which consists of representatives of ministries in the defence and industrial fields, as well as company officials, took the decision in the past few days, because it believes a European solution to the problems of Westland is essential to the future of Agusta and the European helicopter industry.

Government backing is conditional on a satisfactory assessment of the British company's financial position. Confirmation of Italy's interest in Westland came as representatives of Agusta and the French and West German helicopter industries met in London to try to find a European solution to Westland's problems.

In the morning, senior executives of Agusta, Agusta and Messerschmitt-Bolkow-Blohm met under the chairmanship of Mr Michael Heseltine, the Defence Secretary. The armaments directors of the four countries met in the afternoon.

The Ministry of Defence said last night that the meetings had been useful. The arms directors

had had positive discussions on future European helicopter requirements and scope for rationalisation. The next step was for the three companies to consider their positions in relation to Westland.

It was not clear last night whether concrete proposals for rationalising the production of the four companies were produced by the arms directors. If they were to make an offer for Westland, it seems certain that a government-to-government agreement would be necessary.

It could well be discussed again by the defence ministers of the UK, West Germany and Italy when they meet at Nato's defence planning committee in Brussels next week. France is not involved in that meeting.

While there was a degree of official optimism following yesterday's meeting, Westland had not been involved and had apparently not been contacted by the companies.

While Mr Heseltine believes the situation could provide an opportunity to rationalise the European helicopter industry, he is also aware of the lack of Department of Trade and Industry enthusiasm for any solution involving British aid for Westland.

The EH101, a naval and utility helicopter which it is building jointly with Agusta.

Westland urgently requires a financial reconstruction, costing up to £30m, as it tries to fill the gap in its workload and its balance sheet.

The company favours selling a stake of just under 30 per cent to Sikorsky, the helicopter subsidiary of United Technologies of the US.

Agusta, however, is banking on Westland's collaboration in the joint development of its A129 anti-tank helicopter.

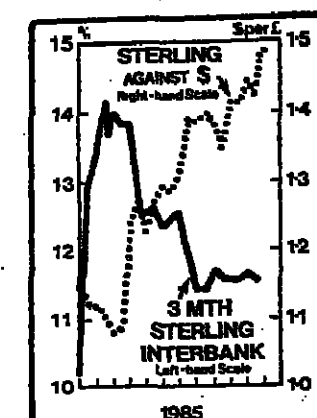
The British Army is interested in buying the improved version of the A129, which in its present version has been ordered only by the Italian army. Sikorsky has its own rival to the A129.

Any solution to the Westland problem which also involved Agusta and Messerschmitt-Bolkow-Blohm would be welcome by Italy, especially if accompanied by a rationalisation of the respective companies' products. The French and West German companies are jointly working on a rival to the A129, despite requests by Italy to abandon it or merge it with the A129.

Agusta itself is weak financially and would have to have government backing for it to help Westland. It lost £120.5bn (£48m) last year on sales of £452bn and is expecting another big loss this year.

Sticking to home base

Index rose 9.9 to 1142.9



A traditionally-minded watcher of the sterling/dollar rate and UK domestic money rates would be more than a bit puzzled by the events of the last week. There can scarcely have been a period since the arrival of floating rates when a rise of several cents would have failed to elicit at least some softening of interbank interest rates. This week sterling nearly exceeded \$1.50 for the first time since October 1983, a rise of some 10 pence, but signs of a cut in bank base rates were nowhere to be seen.

That may be evidence that a tight UK interest rate is now long-term policy whatever happens in the currency market (forget all that stuff about judging domestic monetary conditions by the exchange rate). More likely, it just reflects the fact that sterling is by no means as strong against currencies as strong against currencies other than the dollar, bringing down base rates might merely expose weakness against the D-Mark ahead of next week's Opec meeting. The main burden of adjustment since the Group of Five decided to bring down the dollar has, after all, been carried by the Japanese; the yen exchange rate has now risen to meet its purchasing power parity of 1981, to the evident pain of Japanese exporters.

British Films

In the long-running saga of Thorn EMI Screen Entertainment's sale, there have been almost as many suitors as there were suspects in Thorn's Murder on the Orient Express. But the Cannon/Heron partnership, with its offer of around £10m for the group, claims now to have agreed all but minor details with Thorn EMI.

Thorn must want to sell out as soon as possible. With gearing of around 70 per cent and the prospect of poor interim results in January, a cash injection of £100m or so will be a welcome relief. Which makes the choice of Cannon/Heron slightly puzzling. Cannon and TESE, the two largest cinema operators in Britain, have 200 theatres with over 500 screens between them, a combined division nearly three times the size of their nearest competitor Rank. Given that in 1983, the Monopolies and Mergers Commission deplored the TESE/Rank duopoly in film screening, the formation of a near-monopoly in the shape of Cannon and TESE must be even less desirable.

Tokyo Exchange

Very little that happens in Tokyo is accidental, but perhaps it is not quite so conspiratorial as sometimes appears.

The long-awaited list of new members of the Tokyo Stock Exchange does, nevertheless, confer enough seats on non-Japanese houses to count as a serious display of open-market diplomacy by the Japanese authorities. Nor are the concessions confined to the US opposite numbers of the giant Tokyo securities houses, though Merrill Lynch is in, at long last, and without having to buy a seat for the \$5m which used to be thought its likely price of admission.

So far as the London market is concerned, it is the inclusion of Mercury (in the guise of S. G. Warburg) that is the nearest thing to a surprise. Vickers de Costa and Jardine probably be the greater.

Fleming have been dug into the Tokyo equity market for longer, although Warburg has been picking up equity business recently, to complement its older-established franchise in the bond market. In any case, the opening gives Mercury a window if short-lived distinction as the organisation with membership of the London, Tokyo and New York exchanges.

Clearly the Japanese are taking seriously the semi-mystical position of Mercury as the Bank of England's model new securities house. The Ministry of Finance is doubtless expecting a rapid Yen-pro-quo, in the shape of UK banking licences that have so far been denied to the Japanese banking houses.

Matthew Brown

Matthew Brown's results for the year to September, showing underlying growth at the pre-tax level of 15 per cent, were modest by the recent standards of defensive reporting in the drinks industry, and if the brewer is holding a little back for next month's 1986 forecast, this will certainly not include another 41 per cent increase in the dividend on two-times cover. After a long and futile investigation by the monopolies commission, Matthew Brown shareholders have probably made up their mind on Scottish and Newcastle's bid: the arguments either way are not much affected by these figures.

Matthew Brown's share price closed the week at \$72.25, or at a 7 per cent discount to the 61p implied by S & N's offer at its price of 1982. The account is coincidentally equivalent to the earnings dilution S & N shareholders are likely to suffer in the event of success. More to the point, the market is still not quite certain S & N will succeed.

Each side can claim roughly 25 per cent of the Matthew Brown equity, with the balance divided just as equally between institutional and small shareholders. Anyone distressed by the prospect of the disappearance of a well-run independent brewer should vote against and be prepared to accept the loss of £2 on the Matthew Brown share price which is implied by a market multiple of earnings. Those impelled by greed or future pension liabilities should accept an offer that places value on Matthew Brown's past value in excess of those valued by Allied-Lyons in its balance sheet. The second group will probably be the greater.

INVESTING IN SWISS FRANC BONDS

- Is the equity market so near the top that the risk of loss now outweighs the chances of further gains?
- Are you planning to hold on to your gains by switching a substantial proportion of your investments into fixed interest holdings?
- Is the £ also near the top?
- And the US\$?
- As choice of currency is the key to successful fixed interest investment (even more so than equities) what are the safe currencies in which to buy bonds apart from the US\$, sterling, Swiss franc, DM, and Yen?
- Did you know that in 1985 the US\$ has already fallen from above Sfr2.80 to below Sfr2.10? An increase of 33% for the Swiss Franc.
- Can you remember when you got Sfr12.00 to the £ or Sfr4.50 to the US\$?

B.I.A. Bond Investments AG

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FT 30/11/85

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Saturday November 30 1985

MARKETS • FINANCE & THE FAMILY • PROPERTY • TRAVEL • MOTORING • DIVERSIONS • HOW TO SPEND IT • BOOKS • ARTS • TV

The awakening of Channel Snore

Channel 4 was three years old this month. Godfrey Hodgson looks at Britain's different, but not very different, television.

A SERIES of seven documentaries called *The Writing on the Wall* is now running on Channel Four. It traces the history of British politics from the mid-1960s, when Labour was "the natural party of government," until the early 1980s when, according to executive producer (and former Labour MP) Philip Whitehead, British politics was fixed in a pattern of pessimism, concern on the right about fallen standards, and on the left about betrayed ideals.

It is a superb example of a current affairs documentary, researched meticulously and put together with wit and a laudable sense of the lost opportunities of the 1970s. It is television made by professionals for professionals: just what the idealists inside the business who dreamed up the concept of C4 — and Whitehead was one of them — wanted from a new channel.

On its third birthday, all things considered, C4 is riding high. The crisis days of the launch, just three years ago, of Channel Snore and Channel Swore have been forgotten. Audience share is satisfactory and revenue is approaching the point where the channel is secure from external pressures to change.

Strangely, it is C4's novel organisation as a television publisher, widely admired from the outside, that is causing headaches at headquarters in Charlotte Street, central London, and sending waves of gloom through at least some of the independent producers who once saw the station as a cross between the New Jerusalem and the Comstock Lodge. Oddly enough, it is the most successful independents like Brook Productions, maker of *The Writing on the Wall*, which have shown up the problem first.

In financial terms, C4 is approaching the break-even point from one point of view, while from another it has still got a long way to go. The apparent paradox is explained by the way the channel gets its revenue. Its funding comes from subscriptions paid to the IBA by the TV companies — Thames, Granada, London Weekend and the rest — out of the total revenue they collect from selling advertising both on ITV and C4. This year, the subscription is running at the rate of just under £100m — not counting another £32m for Welsh Channel Four — up from £105m in 1983-84.

According to Peter Rogers, the IBA's finance director and a director of C4, its percentages of the independent (non-BBC) audience and of the total pool of advertising revenue are "converging." He believes the channel is "safe from the argument that it cannot be afforded, or that it ought to be restructured for business or financial reasons."

Mr Rogers admits, though, that a substantial proportion of the money that is spent on C4 advertising is money that would have been spent on ITV if the channel did not exist. He guesses that half of C4's revenue has been taken from ITV in this sense: others

in ITV would argue that the proportion is even higher.

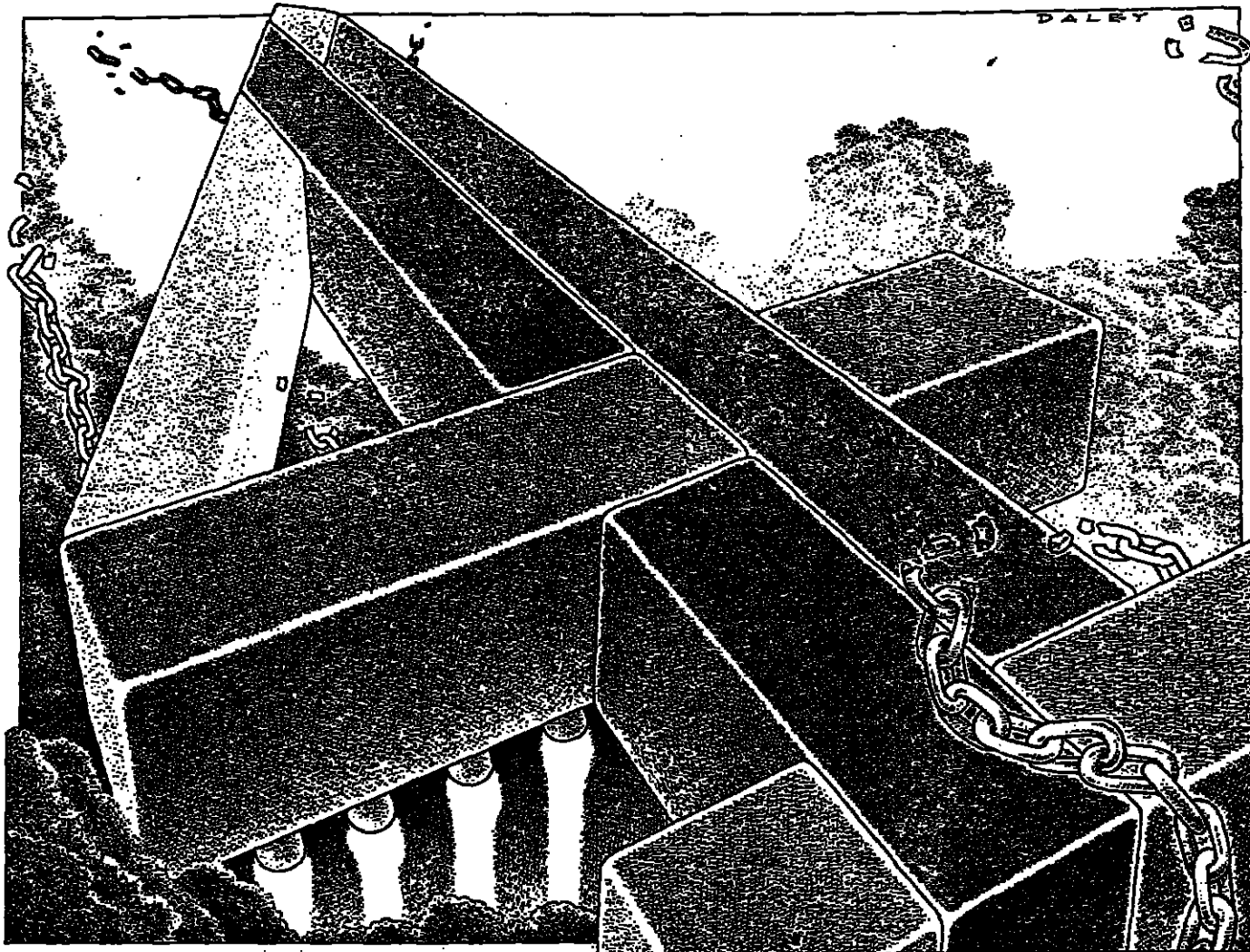
What is clear, however, is that C4 is attracting enough viewers to appeal to advertisers, especially those who want to reach specialist audiences. According to a February 1985 survey by Taylor Nelson, C4's share of the audience has grown from 13.6 per cent last year to 16.5 per cent. According to Saatchi and Saatchi's research, 91 per cent of all adults tune in to C4 at least once a month. The corollary is, of course, that C4's audience is far less different from that of ITV — or indeed, the television audience as a whole — than it was when the channel started with an uncertain toot on the trumpet three years ago.

You can take that any way you please. You can say that it means an end to the image C4 presented at first as the channel for super-minorities (as the prejudiced said, for black lesbian single parents). Conversely, the channel is no longer able to claim, as it sought to do to potential advertisers, that it was able uniquely to deliver the young, the single and the trendy.

If the audience has regressed towards the mean — in the statistical sense — so, too, has the programming. Many of those who work there would deny fiercely, but it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that, in many ways, C4 has emerged from its initial difficulties by rowing back towards the middle of the stream. Instead of aiming at "minorities," the channel has done best when it did traditional television things, and did them more intelligently. The most successful programmes include intelligent soap opera in *Brookside* and intelligent drama series as in *The Price*.

The channel's controller, Jeremy Isaacs, does not deny this. He points out that as far back as 1979, in a lecture in Edinburgh, he predicted that a fourth channel would be — as he himself summarised it last week — "different, but not very different." No wonder both Isaacs and Justin Dukes, the managing director, now sound reasonably pleased with how things have turned out after those first nightmare days. Then, Isaacs found himself in a blazing row with the IBA over a programme called *Animals*, and Dukes had to wrestle with the consequences of a dispute between the IBA and Equity that crippled advertising for almost two years.

It is increasingly fashionable in the industry to talk of the C4 "television publisher" concept as a model for the future development of both the BBC and ITV. Yet, the central idea — of a television channel that would "publish" programmes made by outsiders rather than produce its own, like the BBC and ITV — is not new. The three giant commercial networks in New York, for example, produce little of their own material except news and sport; the rest is bought from independents, many of them in Los Angeles. But the idea first was floated in a British context in 1972



by Anthony Smith, a former editor of the BBC's flagship *Twenty-four Hours*, later a media guru at St Antony's College, Oxford, and now the director of the British Film Institute.

The way it works at C4 is that commissioning editors buy material from independent contractors. These may be the big ITV programme companies, such as Granada or Thames, or independents. Some of these such as Brookside Productions, Brook Productions or Diverse Productions, all of which received more than £1m from C4 in 1984-85, are substantial enterprises. Others are no more than a shell inhabited by an enterprising young producer who has succeeded in selling an idea to one of the commissioning editors. Sometimes, the latter accept ideas from independent producers; sometimes, the editors approach a producer with an idea.

In 1984-85, a total of 990 hours (out of the 3,583 transmitted) was commissioned and made by the ITV companies, and 889 hours by independents. Both, incidentally, were exceeded by far as providers for the channel by acquired material such as sports and feature films, old and new, American and foreign.

The irony is that at the very same moment when this publishing idea is so much in the ascendant, thanks in large part to C4's success, the crucial

mechanism of the channel as a publisher — namely, the commissioning process — is being called sharply into question. It is the focus of deep debate at Charlotte Street and of criticism (even resentment) from some of the independent producers on whom the commissioning process depends.

There are more particular ironies about the case of *The Writing on the Wall*. The managing director of Brook Productions, which also produced the C4 current affairs programme *A Week in Politics*, is David Elstein, who has been associated closely with Isaacs since the 1960s, and Whitehead worked with Isaacs on *Panorama* even earlier. The first programme in the C4 series was produced by Cate Haste, a veteran Granada producer and the wife of London Weekend arts presenter Melvyn Bragg, who is Whitehead's oldest friend.

"Aha!" you might be tempted to murmur. "The old pals act at work!" In this instance, cynicism would be utterly misplaced for Brook Productions has just lost the contract to produce *A Week in Politics*. Moreover, according to Elstein, it will have to split up into its component parts, with, say, Whitehead forming one production company to make documentaries, Elstein concentrating on his other company, Prime Time, and their third partner going his own way. Although Elstein maintains he

is losing no sleep over the prospect, it is a notable fall for perhaps the most successful current affairs enterprise fostered by the C4 system.

Elstein blames C4's method of awarding contracts for his company's problems. He says it does not give those specialising in current affairs the sort of stability they need. He also charges the channel with using its position as, in effect, the only customer for independently produced broadcast current affairs television in Britain, to force costs down to the point where production becomes uneconomic.

Last spring, when negotiations were going on about the future of Brook's contract for *A Week in Politics*, Elstein wrote a letter in which he argued that C4 ought either to pay for a minimum level of overhead — say, a lease on an office, basic office equipment, and the salaries of an accountant, a secretary and a receptionist — to maintain the core of certain selected companies producing specialist programmes, for example in current affairs; or offer a commitment to a certain level of programming.

The letter touched off a considerable debate inside C4. Some commissioning editors, and some directors, thought Elstein had a point. After all, how can you do successful television journalism without some assurance you will be able

to plan ahead? Others were worried deeply at the suggestion they might be setting up a privileged inner ring of companies to which C4 would eventually find itself so committed that its central commitment — to innovation, to being "different" — would be lost.

"There is a problem," concedes Liz Forgan, who, as the senior commissioning editor for current affairs, had to take the hard decisions about *A Week in Politics* and make the first response to the Elstein proposition. "It is an argument between the commitment to constant innovation versus the argument that some kinds of work are terribly hard to do unless you have some measure of permanence. But the question is: how much permanence? We have come down on the side of a constant supply of oxygen for change and innovation."

Whatever the merits of the argument — and there are merits on both sides — C4 has now come down firmly against Elstein's plea for continuity, and in favour of the commitment to innovation.

There are certain contracts — to ITV to produce the news, for example, or for the serial *Brosnan* — the producers of which have bought several houses in a Merseyside suburb in which to shoot — where the capital investment involved has been so heavy that, in effect though not in theory, they are guaranteed a substantial life. But with those few exceptions, the C4 board has endorsed the position of Isaacs and the majority of the commissioning editors that no one's contract is sacrosanct, and most will be for finite periods.

By applying that decision even against Brook — whose members are his oldest and closest friends, Isaacs has signalled that there will be no favourites as well as dramatising his commitment to innovation. Indeed, the intention is to enforce change, even in commissioning editors.

It is almost as if Isaacs, like Trotsky, has committed himself to permanent revolution. Yet the commitment is to innovation — not necessarily to radicalism. Isaacs himself shrugs and dismisses the "dream of a channel without schedules, wholly oppositional in its style." If you work within an institution, he says, you become aware of constraints that are real.

That does not mean that he and his colleagues are not trying to do something that is essentially different from the BBC's traditional purpose. It is often said that C4 is "the last Redcliffe channel," and so it may well be in the sense that the expansion of choice in television of the future will come from new technology, not from a fifth or sixth centralised national station. But Isaacs' view of his audience is that of a multitude of consumers, each avid for choice, not Lord Reith's vision of a family or a flock to be fed a judicious mixture of "information, education and entertainment."

As he put it to me: "In contradistinction to the BBC, it is a pluralistic view we have. You cannot set out to be the nation's television any more." And he paraphrased Dean Acheson's cruel epigram about Britain: "The BBC," he said, "has lost an empire, and not yet found a role." Instead of building a rival empire, he suggested, his job was "to cater for all of the people some of the time."

The Long View

Nice cold weather for Budget-making

AN ORTHOPAEDIC surgeon who was a bit of a legend in the hunting field used to yearn for really cold weather. "It's an ill frost that blows nobody any good," he would say; and as soon as he had pulled on his boots, he would alert his theatre staff of the broken collarbones to come.

Mr Nigel Lawson, the Chancellor, must feel a bit like that these days, for a hard winter would do wonders for his revenues too. The oil market is in a jumpy state at the moment. Stocks are low because the oil majors are still betting on lower prices next year; but because stocks are low, a cold snap quickly pushes up spot prices and output.

This winter bludge in oil company revenues could give the Chancellor quite a nice fiscal cushion for the first half of the 1986-87 financial year because although petroleum revenue tax is paid monthly it is assessed on the previous half-year's performance; and the corporation tax comes in later still. A nice fat cushion is just what the Chancellor may need before he comes to next year's Autumn Statement.

The danger against which he may need protection is the possibility that the oil price will fall out of bed next summer. Anyone who reads this year's Autumn Statement in detail may be under the comfortable illusion that this is already provided for in the reduced projection for oil revenue, but it is not. This allows for some softening, together with the recent rise in sterling against the dollar; but it does not allow for a real shake-out.

This is a real possibility, though, as Sheikh Yamani keeps reminding us. His warnings, it is true, are more like threats than forecasts. He is still pretty angry with non-Opec producers in general and ourselves in par-

The oil market is in a jumpy state and while there is an even chance of a heavy price fall the Chancellor is likely to adopt a stonewalling, say-nothing stance, says Anthony Harris



a game of chicken to see who can get the timing right on re-stocking. If their nerve holds — and it will very probably hold if there is any real prospect of peace in the Gulf, which in turn depends on the falling heel of Ayatollah Khomeini — then the buck passes to Mr Paul Volcker at the US Federal Reserve Board.

The danger here is mainly to the Texas and Oklahoma banks, which are dreadfully exposed to the oil sector. The market is already discounting some trouble here, but there is still a borderline between containing trouble and a real financial crisis. Informed American friends tell me that if the price threatens to fall below \$22 a barrel, someone will have to press the red button.

The American fall-back position is an oil import tax, which would put a floor under the prices received by US producers; but since this would prevent lower prices from stimulating demand in what is by far the world's biggest oil market, this action would make prices even softer outside the US. The recent Yamani warnings would then look very like sober forecasts.

Please remember, though, that what you have just read is not a forecast in any sense: it is simply what forecasters who do not want to stick their necks out call a scenario. Contrarians may also like to remember that just because this is the scenario which the major buyers seem to be providing against, they have left themselves wide open to anything that might stop the price falling, let alone drive it up.

Barring accidents, though, and remembering that we are still in the early stages of replacing the world's car and aircraft fleets with much more

economical new models, it is easy to see why the majors are betting on soft rather than hard prices. The underlying question is what price would be low enough to slow down the process of exporting ever more high-cost oil to add to the current glut — and that is the real core of the Yamani message, too. If these authoritative people are right, what is the sensible thing for Mr Lawson to do about it?

One option is to do nothing. A sharp fall in oil prices will reduce inflation, stimulate real demand in all oil-importing countries, and even give British voters something of the same benefit they would get from the much-discussed tax cut. Purists, then, might argue for sticking to the borrowing targets in the medium term strategy, and forego the tax cuts.

This is hardly appealing to Mr Lawson as an ambitious politician and he could plausibly argue for another doing-nothing approach. If the drop in oil prices is regarded as purely temporary — a typical market overshoot, which will correct itself as soon as serious stock-rebuilding begins — then it would seem sensible to take the strain on the borrowing requirement, just as we took the financial strain of the coal strike. Strategy is about underlying trends, not temporary bumps.

This is especially tempting if the market still looks stable next March. Mr Lawson could hardly talk of providing against a collapse in oil prices (or the dollar, for that matter) without being accused of helping to provoke it. Much better keep quiet; and meanwhile, brush off any questions about fiscal strategy with more than usual brusqueness. Which is what Mr Lawson did in the Treasury Committee only this week.

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Rival bid for BHS could mar Habitat's happiness

ON MONDAY, when Mr David Cassidy of BHS said that he had turned his back on the company, he gave the stores sector and the market overall the kind of shove that helped push respective indices to record levels.

For after the bitterness of the battles over control of Debenhams and Harrod's earlier this year, Habitat/Mothercare and BHS announced a happy families style merger through the formation of a new holding company.

As the week was ending, however, BHS shares were leaping ahead of the 300p to 400p price implicit in the holding company arrangement given a Habitat share price in the 540p to 550p range. And on the market, rumours were rife that a bidder may be about to enter the scene.

In the proposed scheme BHS will constitute 55 per cent of British Habitat, or whatever the new holding company is called, and Sir Terence Conran's shareholders will have the rest. Sir Terence will be chairman and chief executive of a 900 store group, which will have a market capitalisation of over £1.5bn, sales of about £1bn and will employ more than 30,000 staff.

Both companies recently produced interim results. The £16.6m pre-tax (excluding property income) on sales of £236m from BHS was below the City's expectations. The best that could be said at the time of the announcement was that final judgment on whether or not the transformation of the stock from one that travelled at a discount to the sector, with a prospective rating of 15, to a mainstream rated performer, would have to wait.

On Monday Habitat announced half-year results of £16.1m pre-tax on sales of £226m, which supported forecasts of £45m for the year and a prospective rating three points higher than its partner-to-be.

When the brokers did a few quick sums on the merged group they came up with a prospective rating of 21 on forecast profits of £115m for the year to March 1986.

Initially on this forecast but latterly on speculation of a fresh bid, BHS's shares moved up sharply, from 338p to 431p over the week. BHS shares will be exchanged on a one for one basis with those of the proposed holding company according to the merger scheme.

For Habitat a rating similar to that forecast on the merger was already reflected in the group's price and the shares therefore naturally moved up more modestly, from 520p to 540p.

The merger proposal has brought BHS's rating up to something like the stores sector average of 21 times earnings.

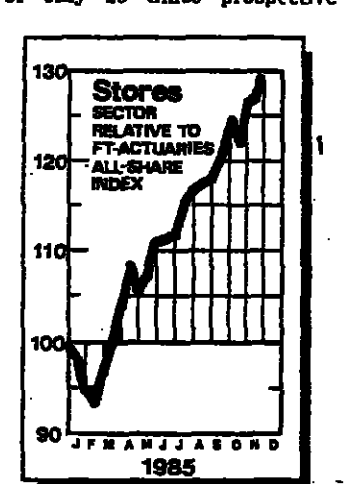
The justification (and no doubt this is what any bidder will also be looking at) has to be that while much has been done to improve management and the look of the group's stores in the past couple of years, future growth depended on boosting sales above the very low £200 per square foot level. This, for comparison, is only half that of Marks & Spencer.

Also on Monday came the news that Imperial Group was in merger discussions with United Biscuits. While no terms have yet been announced the City is expecting some £3 a share for United and anything much short of this could see

other bidders entering the fray. Unlike the BHS-Habitat plan, which is surely aimed at building a combined group big enough to do battle on the high streets with the majors, the Imps-United move looks more defensive in posture.

After its sale of Howard Johnson, Imperial, Britain's sixth largest brewer and leading cigarette producer, has some £300m in cash and reduced debts must be a bit vulnerable. Barclay Brothers have been seen to be fairly freely building up a stake in the group and the market also has Hanson Trust, after its knockback over SCM this week, as an interested party.

The announcement of the terms with United could well flush out a contender for Imps given its present modest rating of only 10 times prospective



earnings on forecasts of £255m for the year to October 1986.

United, the world's largest biscuit maker, is also not without its fans - especially in the US. The chance to acquire some strong brands may be too good to pass up for an American food major, especially if it involves a company with substantial US interests.

Since the talks announcement,

United's shares have put on some 40p, taking the rating on a forecast of £102m for 1985 to 14 times earnings - close to the market's idea of the right buy out multiple.

Hanging also in the air is the possibility that a merger plan between Imps and United may be referred to the Monopolies Commission. Concentration in the snacks market might just tip the balance towards such a move. Delay would hardly suit either party if defence is the key motive for the talks.

The bigger than expected £4.6m pre-tax loss by Apricot Computers announced on Tuesday was overshadowed by the huge computer company's retrenchment plans. About 20 per cent of the UK staff are to go and the West German subsidiary has been closed.

Profit forecasts for the year to March 1986 show earnings of little more than 1p a share, producing a most impressive multiple that will, however, fool nobody.

It was the portable machine that did most of the damage, aided and abetted by the low margins on the sub-£1,000 single disc drive computers. All these models are to go as part of a range reduction programme that sits alongside the staff cuts and closures.

The immediate response of the market to this package of announcements was to mark the shares up 5p to 65p but second thoughts have trimmed away all this gain. By the end of the week the shares were back down to the level of the sub-60p net book value.

With stocks of less than two months in hand and the prospect of being cash generating in 1986, Apricot could look like a classic recovery stock to some. Certainly the shares are a very long way off the 250p plus levels seen in late 1984.

Perhaps there's another Olivetti waiting in the wings with some cash to spend; or perhaps the middle of the market is the worst place to be when the bottom drops out from underneath you.

The FT-All Share Index closed yesterday at 696.53, down on last Friday due to the spate of profit taking in mid-week. The leaders in the stores sector were all ahead, with the prospects of the Christmas spending spree before them. The analysts are, however, not joining in the seasonal goodwill and many seem to feel that the market is now at its top. Any bad news on oil prices or inflation or a poor result from a major company could see a retreat. Venturing much over 700 will be full of risks, they say, but the bears have been waiting a long time to be proved right.

Since the talks announcement,

Terry Povey

MARKET HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK

	Price y/day	Change on week	1985 High	1985 Low	
F.T. Ordinary Index	1,142.9	+7.5	1,148.9	911.0	Profit-taking impedes market's progress
Asset Special Sits. Trust	53	+12	84	38	Guildhall acq./stake changes hands
BP Inds.	372	+17	378	212	Good interim results
Babcock Intl.	188	+11	194	120	Rumours of stake build-up
Blundell-Permaglaze	128	+54	205	90	Agreed bid from Alko
British Home Stores	432	+59	436	273	Merger triggers counter-bid hopes
BP	570	-35	605	437	Earlier spot oil prices
Burton	573	-30	625	408	Habitat option doubts
Cadbury Schweppes	173	+26	176	131	US bid hopes
Carless Capel	108	-14	175	98	Disappointing interim results
Dawson Intl.	222	+16	222	182	Impressive interim results
Ex-Lands	30	+16	30	12	Share put-through excites buyers
Freemans	394	+22	394	182	Broker's recommendation
Imperial Group	244	+26	245	162	Persistent takeover speculation
Lloyds Bank	458	-20	513	345	Sth. American debt worries resurface
Pearson	420	+65	420	287	Takeover rumours
Stothert & Pitt	188	+40	190	113	Takeover speculation
Tate & Lyle	588	+48	590	417	Renewed takeover speculation
Tricentral	145	-18	260	142	Recent poor figs./oil price fears
United Biscuits	278	+35	280	163	Merger talks with Imperial Group

Sykes is the name to watch

WITH only 21 shopping days to Christmas and the marketplace hungry for stocking-fillers, the usual trickle of new issues on the USM has become a stream.

Three companies joined this week and another nine are at an advanced stage of preparation for their debut. The market, however, is showing no signs of saturation and West Yorkshire Independent Hospital, Millward Brown, and Snowdon and Bridge all went to respectable premiums when dealings began on Monday.

Out of the present crop of hopefuls, one in particular catches the eye—not so much because of the nature of the business but because of the man behind it. The company is Technical Component Industries, and its chairman is Hugh Sykes.

Mr Sykes, 53, is well known to regular followers of the USM for as chairman of Thermal Scientific Holdings, he heads one of the market's most successful companies.

A likeable and unassuming Yorkshireman, Mr Sykes is known and respected in the City for his shrewd and hard-nosed business approach. His industrial experience is broad. After five years as an article clerk with accountant Thomson McLintock, he began his corporate career as treasurer and later managing director (finance) of the Steel Industry conglomerate. He then became finance director with Simon Engineering and assistant group managing director with the Bath and Portland Group. Since 1977, he has been a non-executive director of Harris Queensway.

The roots of Thermal Scientific and Technical Component Industries go back to 1977 when

Mr Sykes set up Bamford Hall Holdings. This was an investment vehicle through which he set about nurturing small companies to greater strength: one of its notable but less widely known achievements was in rescuing a firm of liquidators from insolvency.

In 1983, one of Bamford Hall's companies, Carbolic Furnaces, had reached the stage where Mr Sykes felt it was ready for the market. So he floated it off, merging it along the way with Stanton Redcroft which he acquired from GEC.

Reborn as Thermal Scientific, this company has grown in the short time since its birth to the point where it can claim justifiably to be one of the world's leading thermal technology groups. In doing so, it has demonstrated a voracious appetite for acquisitions, adding two US and two UK companies (one of them from the Bamford Hall

fold) to the group structure. The rapid increase in its earnings has produced a rise in its share price from 85p at the placing in July 1983 to about 340p now after a two-for-five rights issue earlier this year.

Interim results due out in December are unlikely to disappoint and the group looks set for a move to the main market next year.

Technical Component Industries, the placing of which, at 130p, was announced on Wednesday, has a similar structure to that of Thermal Scientific in that it is the newly-created holding company for a Bamford Hall graduate called Stainless Steel Fasteners. It has no other subsidiaries yet.

Stainless Steel Fasteners was founded in 1965 as a mass producer of standard nuts and

bolts; but under the stewardship of Mr Sykes and Bill Speirs, the managing director he installed, it has turned into a specialist producer of high performance fasteners for use in hostile environments where, for instance, there are extremes of temperature or corrosive conditions.

Like Thermal Scientific, SSF is a niche engineer, and like Thermal Scientific, it bears many of the familiar Sykes hallmarks. A strong management team has been installed, rigorous financial controls are in operation, participation by employees is encouraged (10 per cent of the shares being issued are going to them) and, extremely demanding growth targets are set.

Mr Sykes is cagey about going on record with forecasts for earnings growth, but it seems likely the new company would be very disappointed if it were to under-perform Thermal Scientific's targeted minimum annual earnings growth of 30 per cent.

One difference between Thermal Scientific and Technical Component Industries is that Mr Sykes is executive chairman of the former but non-executive chairman of the latter. He will, however, be putting more than his reputation into the new company: he has sold already that he will be taking overall responsibility for its development and expansion; and his constant searches for candidates for the Thermal Scientific maw are likely to throw up suitable prey for Technical Component Industries along the way.

The prospective p/e of 16.5 on forecast profits of £295,000 for the year to this December might normally look a little rich for an engineer, even a niche one; but with the Sykes name behind it, the issue seems likely to find strong support—and, is certainly going to be watched closely.

Richard Tomkins

COMPANY NEWS SUMMARY

TAKE-OVER BIDS AND DEALS

Company bid for	Value of bid per share*	Market price**	Price bid	Value bid	Bidder
Prices in pence unless otherwise indicated.					
Abbey	103½	114	90	20.12	French Kler
Allied Lyons	256	225	275	1.724bn	Elder DCL
Arlington Motor	200	198	146	15.57	Alko
Blundell-Permaglaze	188	198	176	14.40	Reed Intl.
Britannia Arrow	148	145	131	219.5	Gulnuss Feet
Brook St Bureau	187	185	162	18.33	Blue Arrow
Brown (Matthew)	814	814	540	138.24	Scot & Newcastle
Clay (Richard)	215	216	184	19.41	St Ives
Cole Group	280	280	240	7.53	Low & Bonar
Dew (George)	103½	110	92	8.16	Bremner
Drayton Prem Inv	500	517	445	193.52	NCS Pensa Funds
Dufay Bitumastic	581½	571	56	9.61	Reaser (C.H.)
Dufay Bitumastic	501	571	47	8.30	Kalon Group
French Kler	236	251	224	116.21	Reaser (C.H.)
Kitchen Taylor	2003	188	245	7.78	Scot & Newcastle
Maynards	357	420	338	18.95	Ward White
Needlers	186½	182	150½	3.27	Hilldown Hlds
Owen Owen	497½	510	460	47.59	Ward White
Pearce (C.H.)	754½	675	725	28.46	Crest Nicholson
Pyke (Higgs)	413	398	245	16.02	Hilldown Hlds
Sangers Photo	401	103	39	3.04	Mr J. Peace
Security Centrest	135	144	100	21.49	Automated Security
SGS Group	279	268	226	118.15	BET
Somportex	284½	156	27	0.79	Messrs N. Wray & C. Matlock
Spear & Jackson	285	256	168	15.07	Neill (James)
Sparrow (G.W.)	744	77	48	7.36	BET
Stewart Plastics	181	147	112	34.33	Bunzl
Telefusion	53½	53	34	26.11	Electronic Bents
Towngrade Secs	32½	40	37	1.67	Millbank Dev
United Parcels	187	185	113	98.64	Bunzl
Wick & Homet	231	211	161	3.01	Hilldown Hlds
Wingate Prop Inv	128	125	105	17.68	Trarford Park Eats

* All cash offer. † Cash alternative. ‡ Partial bid. § For capital not already held. ¶ Unconditional. ** Based on November 29 1985. †† At suspension. ‡‡ Shares and cash. ‡‡‡ Related to NAV to be determined. ‡‡‡‡ Loan stock. ‡‡‡‡‡ Suspended.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Company	Year to	Pre-tax profit (£000)	Earnings* per share (p)	Dividends* per share (p)			
Abbeycrest	Aug	760	(824)	7.3	(6.2)	—	(—)
Baldwin, H. J.	April	71	(210)	—	(2.9)	—	(—)
Bolton Textile	April	111	(93)	1.2	(1.1)	—	(—)
Cronite Group	Sept	408	(202)	7.3	(3.6)	—	(—)
Davenport Brew	Sept	1,890	(2,430)	15.1	(18.9)	9.0	(9.0)
Dubilier	Sept	6,870	(5,260)	13.6	(10.9)	2.8	(2.4)
Epicure Hldgs	June	3,260L	(12)	—	(—)	—	(—)
Fenner, J.M.	Aug	3,980	(3,020)	—	(5.0)	5.0	(5.0)
Kwik Save Disc	Aug	20,600	(17,450)	12.7	(11.7)	4.8	(4.1)
Kynoch, G. & G.	Aug	126	(91)	14.5	(13.1)	1.5	(1.0)
MEPC	Sept	51,600	(45,263)	—	(10.5)	9.0	(8.0)
MMT Computing	Aug	432	(355)	12.9	(9.4)	4.0	(3.25)
Moran Tea Hldgs	June	477	(733)	—	(18.5)	10.0	(10.0)
Morland & Co.	Sept	2,390	(2,180)	15.1	(16.4)	6.38	(5.75)
Peters Stores	June	1,900L	(1,35L)	—	(0.5)	0.2	(0.2)
Radio City	Sept	181L	(262)	—	(6.0)	—	(5.6)
Royal Bank Scot	Sept	166,300	(180,945)	36.7	(30.5)	9.6	(8.5)
St Ives Group	June	2,330	(1,750)	—	(—)	—	(—)
Share Drug Store	Aug	1,370	(851)	8.9	(7.0)	1.8	(1.1)

INTERIM STATEMENTS

Company	Half-year to	Pre-tax profit (£000)	Interim dividends* per share (p)			
Allied Lyons	Sept	122,600	(100,822)	3.25	(2.5)	
Alphameric	Sept	512	(344)	0.25	(—)	
Apricot Computers	Sept	4,000L	(3,620)	0.35	(0.35)	
Assoc. Invest Serv	Sept	1,710	(1,300)	4.0	(3.3)	
Bassett Foods	Oct	1,060	(1,700)	—	1.78	(1.68)
BFB	Sept	46,600	(40,400)	3.5	(3.1)	
Brickhams Dudley	Sept	304	(786)	—	(—)	
Bulgin, A. J.	July	268	(268)	—	(0.58)	
Burroughs, J.	Aug	4,410	(4,050)	4.0	(3.0)	
Carless Capel	Sept	4,880	(3,080)	1.0	(1.0)	
Century Oils	Sept	2,110	(1,440)	1.5	(1.0)	
Chambrin Philip	Sept	2,110	(2,530)	1.1	(1.1)	
Compos Hlds	Sept	307	(202)	—	(—)	
Country Cent Ass	June	124	(132)	—	(—)	
Cropper, James	Sept	830	(388)	0.95	(0.6)	
Crown House	Sept	1,630	(1,468)	3.0	(2.75)	
Davies Int'l	Sept	14,600	(13,507)	1.9	(1.73)	
Delmar Group	Sept	126	(107)	—	(—)	
Dixon, David	Sept	423	(561)	3.0	(2.5)	
Dunhill Hlds	Sept	7,970	(5,820)	2.0	(1.5)	
Freshbake Foods	Sept	852	(809)	0.6	(0.6)	
Helical Bar	Aug	120	(49L)	—	(—)	
Interline Video	May	1,881	(—)	—	(—)	
Johnson Matthew	Sept	10,500	(9,400)	0.5	(—)	
Kitchen Taylor	Sept	606	(1,440)	3.0	(3.0)	
Leigh Interests	Sept	720	(415)	1.3	(1.0)	
Lloyd, F. H.	Sept	802	(307)	1.0	(—)	
Marshall's (Hals)	Sept	4,140	(3,479)	1.5	(1.0)	
Merrydown Wine	Sept	602	(563)	1.0	(0.89)	
Norton Oper	Sept	2,120	(1,000)	1.0	(0.83)	
Ocean Wilsons	June	1,390	(1,440)	—	(—)	
Parkland Text	Aug	303	(910)	1.6	(1.6)	
Penny's Giles	Sept	414	(286)	0.88	(—)	
Prem Cons Oil	Sept	2,700	(2,370)	—	(—)	
Printemps Hlds	Oct	355	(226)	1.0	(—)	
Property Part	Sept	893	(561)	2.5	(2.2)	
Redsand	Sept	50,700	(48,300)	3.93	(3.57)	
Sekers Int'l	Sept	681	(377)	0.25	(0.6)	
Sheraton Secs	Sept	661	(437)	0.25	(—)	
600 Group	Oct	3,060	(2,290)	2.34	(2.34)	
Smith Bros	Oct	3,040	(1,790)	2.0	(1.5)	
Southwest Res	Sept	1,890	(1,200)	—	(—)	
Steinberg Group	Sept	1,310	(375)	1.25	(1.0)	
Sumrie Clothes	Sept	127L	(173L)	—	(—)	
Unigate	Sept	34,400	(25,900)	3.45	(3.0)	
Unilock	Sept	801	(340)	0.83	(0.58)	
Warrington, T.	June	406L	(113)	—	(1.75)	
Whittington Eng	Sept	39	(17)	1.4	(1.4)	

(Figures in parentheses are for the corresponding period.) * Dividends are shown net of tax per share, except where otherwise indicated. L.Loss.

RIGHTS ISSUES

Barham Group—A four for three rights issue at 110p.
Bodycote International—To raise £2.7m through a one for four rights issue at 148p.
Crown House—To raise £5.6m through a one for five rights issue at 130p.
Smiths Bros—To raise £13.5m through a one for three rights issue at 165p.
Tosco Kemley and Milbourn—To raise £12.6m through a rights issue of 94 per cent convertible preference shares on the basis of three preference shares for every 10 ordinary shares held, at a price of 40p.

Two sides of a golden coin

"LEAVING aside politics," he began.

"You can't," I replied.

"Yes, but if you could," he persisted, "you would wonder if investment in South Africa is such a bad bet when you see results like those from Anglo American."

Anglo covers most aspects of the country's economy. Mainly mining, of course, but there's also industrial and commercial interests, finance and insurance, oil, gas and property.

"So," he demanded, "if the South African economy is in such bad shape, how is it that Anglo turned in best-ever profits of R880.4m in the year to March 31; has just announced a 30 per cent advance to R452.4m in earnings for the first half of the present year; and has said that the results for the full year should show a similar improvement?"

At this stage, we do not have the breakdown of the contribution of the group's various sectors to the latest profits. However, the good result reflects two major elements. They are the boost to income provided by the conversion of high value US dollar sales—noteably of gold—into cheap rands, and the good performance in both domestic and export markets of the group's important coal side.

Mining

A dramatic illustration of the benefit to Anglo of the weak rand is given by the price of gold. In the first half of this year it fell 18.6 per cent to \$310 an ounce, but the rand equivalent rose by no less than 19 per cent to R823 an ounce.

Gold mine dividends have responded accordingly. The group's Western Holdings, for example, recently declared a 100 per cent dividend for the year to September 30 of 490 cents. This compared with only 315 cents a year ago.

The other side of the coin is that for a UK investor the latest increased final dividend from Western Holdings was worth only 126p at ruling exchange rates, whereas last year's lower dividend in South African currency was equivalent to 147p at that time.

There is not much profit in that for a non-South African investor. Still, many of them have been wondering if the

time has come to move back in a modest way into South African gold shares after the market's long decline.

It was noticeable that all shares involved in the big Orange Free State merger went ahead when dealings were resumed on Monday.

South African investors have been big buyers of the country's gold shares. Apart from the fact that they are not allowed to move their money out of the Republic, investment in high-paying domestic gold mines makes a lot of sense to them, particularly as a hedge against rising inflation.

There's the rub. South Africa's economy is going through a difficult time and it is not getting any better. So, a UK investor hoping to make a capital gain on the back of South African buying is taking quite a chance, even at today's share prices and yields — and leaving aside politics.

It is not only South Africa that has a weak currency of course. The Australian dollar is poorly and likely to remain so for some time, according to Bill Galbraith, the man who largely pioneered the revival of activity in Western Australia's Eastern Goldfields with his Carr Minerals and associated Hill Minerals.

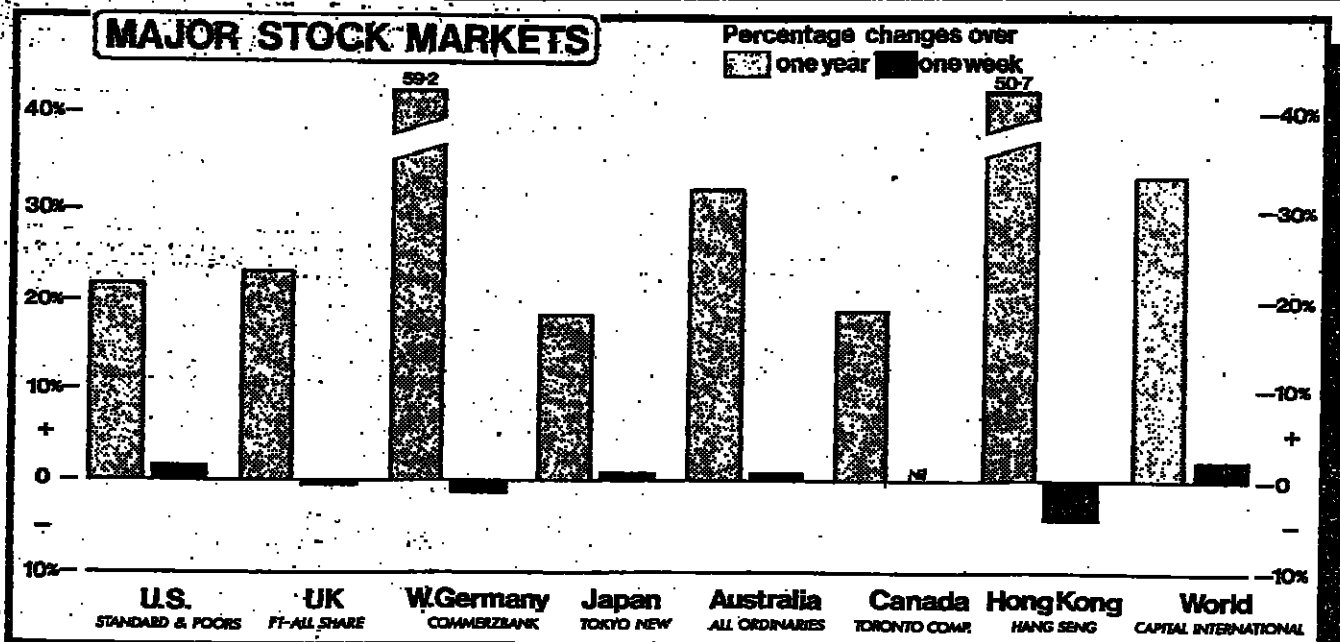
At the moment, he is particularly excited about the potential for his group's multi-spectral scanner system, which will greatly assist prospectors in spotting new mineral deposits. It can also pick up indications of oil and gas, which brings a sparkle to the Galbraith eye.

This does not affect his ambition to open up further gold mines in the Eastern Goldfields. Nor will he admit that the game is now becoming played out there, but he is also looking to new gold areas. Queensland excites his interest, as does Indonesia.

So far, the Carr Boyd camp has not made its mark in Indonesia, but the country is seeing the beginnings of a gold rush. Among those looking at the potential are the Rio Tinto-Zinc group's CRZ.

This company has just accepted Australia's Claremont Petroleum and New Zealand Goldfields Investments as joint partners holding 35 per cent of its two gold exploration prospects in Kalimantan.

Kenneth Marston



Bouncing back from Black Friday

THE LISTING in recent months of companies with names like Esperado Resources, Pirate Gold Corporation, Noxe Petroleum and Golden Chance Resources is evidence that the Vancouver Stock Exchange remains some of the spice that comes from trading more than 2,000 highly speculative "penny stocks."

But the VSE is working hard to dispel its reputation as a stock casino. In particular, it has tried to reverse damage done by the sudden fall in prices during October 1984 which led to allegations of a stock manipulation racket and questions about the exchange's ability to police the colourful speculators and promoters who make the Vancouver market what it is.

Doubts about the VSE's capacity to continue attracting business have largely been dispelled by a 27 per cent advance in trading volumes in the first 10 months of this year. Last October's volume, averaging 10.1m shares a day, was the highest ever for the month.

Share prices have bounced up by around 40 per cent since the October 1984 crisis. Two more securities firms, including the US group Dean Witter Reynolds, have signed up as VSE members, bringing the total to 49.

The authorities in British Columbia and the exchange have taken firm action to clear the air over what has become known as the Black Friday affair. Two stock promoters have been charged with fraud

and share price manipulation. Three directors of Beaufort Resources, one of the companies at the centre of the storm, have resigned and a local securities firm has launched lawsuits against a number of clients.

Tighter surveillance and new listing requirements are among the measures taken in the past year to sustain confidence in the VSE without undermining its unique position as a spawning ground for high-risk (but sometimes rewarding) ventures.

Senior exchange officials now meet each Friday afternoon to review the week's most active shares and to examine possible links between them. Trading in a company automatically is halted if its share price moves beyond a pre-determined (but secret) range. Twenty-five such

Vancouver

orders were issued in September.

The new listing rules mean that resource companies generally have progressed further in evaluating their properties before trading in their shares commences. Before a listing is approved, companies must now spend at least C\$80,000 on assets and have raised a minimum of C\$100,000 in "seed capital" compared with C\$25,000 and C\$40,000 respectively before Black Friday.

The new rules appear to have discouraged some of the most risky ventures. Twenty com-



panies were listed during October, half the number in the same month a year earlier. An exchange official says candidly that the aim is to reduce the number of new listings, while raising their quality.

With 80 per cent of the newcomers being budding mineral or energy producers, the VSE remains a resource-oriented market. Its finest hour in recent times was its role in financing some of the key players in the rich Hemlo gold field in western Ontario. However, industrial companies are beginning to steal some of the limelight.

One industrial success story is the Toronto-based International Verifac, which raised C\$500,000 on the VSE early last year with little more to show investors than the prototype of a new credit card authorisation terminal. Verifac now numbers several major North

American banks and retail chains among its customers, and recently landed an order for 7,500 terminals from Lucky Stores, a leading California food and department store chain.

Verifac's share price bounced up from C\$1.80 to almost C\$6 in less than a year. It has settled back to C\$3.30 following a 25 per cent increase in the company's share capital during October.

Another VSE-listed company, Net Technologies, has made its presence felt in the market for electronic conferencing technology. Its share price doubled between January and August this year and Net acquired a Massachusetts-based supplier of computer conferencing software for C\$3.25m earlier this month.

Other cases illustrate, however, that investing in the VSE's industrial sector can be as speculative as buying shares in a company looking for oil or gold.

A resource group, with assets consisting mainly of mining claims announced last month that it plans to issue up to 12m shares to finance the search for a cure for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Another company listed recently is called Loh's Sinfully Good Ice Cream. A VSE listings official confides that the names chosen for some new ventures "are a constant source of embarrassment."

Bernard Simon

When law leads to corporate disorder

OUT IN the heartland of America, the wheels of industry were beginning to slow down by Wednesday in anticipation of the Thanksgiving holiday on Thursday. But in a partly desolate Manhattan, Wall Street went roaring ahead; the Dow Jones Industrial Average soared up by almost 20 points to put itself in striking range of 1,500. Dealers had no cause for despondency over their turkey this year.

While interest rates continue to exert the underlying influence on the behaviour of the market, the role of the dollar has been even more evident this week. Wednesday's rise in the Dow industrial index was somewhat stronger than the upswing in the broader market averages, partly because the Dow contains a large number of international groups whose fortunes are closely related to currency movements.

To take just one example, the share price of Merck, the drugs company with substantial overseas earnings, jumped by \$4 to \$130, and was followed up by a number of other pharmaceutical stocks, including Upjohn and Eli Lilly.

Such heavy buying suggests growing conviction that the dollar has been conclusively

analysed that it was experiencing an improvement in its "incoming order rate."

Digital shares jumped \$34 on Wall Street to \$122, and the movement was followed up, in a less dramatic way, by significant increases in a whole raft of stocks—Honeywell, Xerox, Data General, IBM and Prime Computer.

On the downside, equities this week have had to absorb the depressing impact of one of the most extraordinary events of the year, the massive \$10.5bn damages award against Texaco, the multi-national oil group.

The court decision on behalf of Pennzoil—which claimed that it had agreed takeover terms with Getty Oil a year ago when Texaco stepped in with a higher offer—took investors entirely by surprise. Its significance also took a certain time to sink in.

But as Texaco was forced to admit that the award conceivably could lead it to file for bankruptcy under the preliminary Chapter 11 proceedings, the share price began to crumble. Since the decision, the stock has lost one-fifth of its value, falling to around \$31, and \$2bn has been lopped off Texaco's market value.

Only last year, the oil group spent \$1.3bn to buy out a large and potentially hostile stake held by the Bass family at a price of \$50 a share. The change in valuation underscores the point that in the US litigation should never be ignored, because the courts often change the course of a company's affairs overnight.

The law delivered another blow in the New York courts this week, where Hanson Trust's efforts to gain control of SCM met with a preliminary judgement against the UK company. Hanson now is taking the case—which calls for the cancellation of SCM's option to sell some of its "crown jewel" assets to Merrill Lynch—to a higher court, where, on past evidence, it has a reasonable chance of winning.

Arbitrators who hold most of the SCM stock, however, marked the shares down after the ruling, indicating that they, at least, think that Hanson's chances have taken a knock.

Arbitrators who hold most of the SCM stock, however, marked the shares down after the ruling, indicating that they, at least, think that Hanson's chances have taken a knock.

Terry Dodsworth

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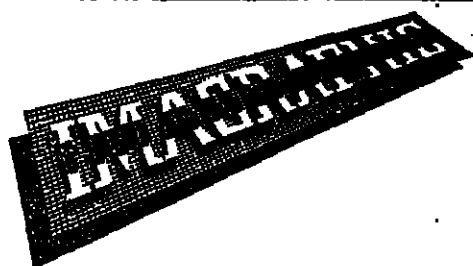
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Casting off inhibitions

Universal life plans are sweeping the US as the answer to every person's requirement for protection and savings. A similar head of steam is building up in Britain, with a new version of the universal life plan coming out each week.

This week it was the turn of Guardian Royal Exchange assurance, which has launched its version under the title of "Freedom." The name presumably is meant to imply that an investor using life concepts, inhibitions which GRE, as a traditional company, has also had to get rid of.

GRE, a leader in the permanent health market (PHA), is able to offer a more complete package than many of the newer linked life companies. Investors in "Freedom" have a choice of protection for life cover, permanent health cover, hospital cover, and investment.

Freedom in the wider sense also carries a responsibility to use that freedom without abusing others. GRE is marketing mainly through independent intermediaries, and its responsibility is to ensure that its clients use the flexibility of universal life plans to meet their clients' needs—not as a means of selling life cover and getting the highest commission rates. (A universal life policy, classified as a whole life policy, is at the very top of the commission scale.)

Thus it means selling the contracts of a life company whose life cover and protection premiums are competitive and whose investment record is good. Fortunately GRE has been a leader in term assurance and PHI for decades, and its investment team was good enough to win last year's Unit Trust Management Group of the Year award, established by the Observer newspaper.

GRE, which pioneered non-smoking discounts on life cover premiums, now offers a discount on its PHI rates for non-smokers. However it is still charging women extra for PHI.

Building with BRIC

Regional loyalty stretches only so far—or that is what Business Expansion Scheme funds have found when trying to raise money for local investment. But a new investment offered by Unity Trust, the trade union bank, gives a greater degree of security than these funds, and may have a stronger appeal to local pride.

The British Regional Investment Certificate, or BRIC, will pay a variable interest rate fixed monthly by reference to money market rates. The rate until December 31 will be 10.75 per cent gross, or 8.62 per cent net—rather below the current market rate. For individual investors income tax will be deducted at the composite rate.

The first BRIC on offer is for the West Midlands, and it was launched in Birmingham last week. It will be marketed by Unity Trust itself and by local authorities in the area; the money raised will be used for loans to West Midlands companies.

The specific investment risk is borne by Unity Trust, which itself guarantees the investor's money.

The minimum investment in the BRIC is £200, but investments over £10,000 will get a bonus interest rate—currently 11 per cent gross, 8.82 per cent net. The initial

deposit must be for a year, but after that you may withdraw your money at one month's notice.

"Through the West Midlands ERIC," said Unity Trust's managing director Terry Thomas, "any investor in the West Midlands who has the interests of the local economy and people at heart will be able to earn a high rate of interest and to dedicate his funds to that purpose."

The nuts and bolts of shares

AN ENDORSEMENT by the Prime Minister, no doubt part of her campaign to encourage wider share ownership, introduces a new book by a former Financial Times journalist, Rosemary Barr. In her introduction to it, Mrs Thatcher says: "It is about the nuts and bolts of buying, holding and selling shares. It should prove a valuable source of information and advice for many."

The Share Book, as it is called, is aimed at the newcomer to shareholding. It explains the differing roles of the Stock Exchange, Unlisted Securities Market (USM) and the Over-the-Counter (OTC) markets. It also has a glossary of terms used, perks available, and useful names and addresses. Priced at £5.95, it is available from leading bookshops or direct from Roster Publications, 60 Woburn Street, London W1 (01-935 4550).

National improvement

INTEREST RATES on the National Savings Ordinary Account are never precisely, but the government-run savings bank has now announced a slight improvement. Investors have been getting 3 per cent unless they maintain a balance of more than £50 throughout the calendar year, when the interest rises to 6 per cent.

The new arrangement will pay 6 per cent for each calendar month in which you keep your balance about £500, but you do not have to maintain £500 in your account all year round. You do, however, need to

keep at least £100 in the account for the whole calendar year to qualify for the higher interest rate in those months when the balance is more than £500. Sounds complicated? It is. The consolation is that your first £70 a year of interest on the ordinary account is tax-free.

Prudential hot line

The Prudential has installed a special hotline telephone service to cope with the expected rush in applications for its latest unit trust before the initial offer expires on December 5.

The company says that since the launch of its Holborn Special Situations Trust on November 16 it has attracted £5m from investors. So it has installed a direct free line service to its 1100 headquarters (0800-010-345) handling the offer, from 10 am to 4 pm this weekend and from 8 am to 6 pm on weekdays.

Expatriate savings plan

A NEW Expatriate Savings Plan from Rothschild Asset Management (RAM) allows expatriates to make regular investments in international stock markets and currencies through the group's offshore funds. By selecting the appropriate RAM fund, the saver is able to choose which country's stock market or currency the money should be invested in, and how much should be allocated to each.

This allocation can be varied at any time, as can the amount invested (subject to a minimum of £20 a month or its equivalent in another currency). You do not necessarily have to save monthly but each payment must be at least £20. If you do not want to make the investment selection yourself, RAM will do it for you. Penalty-free withdrawals can be made after 21 days' notice and the only charges are those normally incurred in offshore fund investment. There is no extra charge for the savings plan itself.

Flat tenancy

Helping poor relations

EVEN establishing the identity of your landlord can prove a daunting task if you live in one of the thousands of privately-owned, purpose-built blocks of flats put up in Britain over the past 100 years.

Flat-dwellers complain often that they have become the poor relations of the private housing sector, deprived of the rights and legal status of other forms of homeownership and often at the mercy of profiteering and unprofessional landlords who can make life miserable.

Common complaints cover the abuse of service charges, the role of managing agents, the frequent resale of flats over the heads of occupiers and the failure of landlords to insure their property fully.

The level of concern prompted the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) to set up its own investigation into the difficulties faced by the occupants of purpose-built blocks and, when it reported in 1985, it was a number of major recommendations. The then Minister of Housing, Ian Gow, said that changes in the law would be required to implement some of the proposals and appointed another committee to assemble further evidence in advance of any possible legislation.

Now, the Nugee Committee has come up with a string of recommendations designed to redress the balance between landlords and tenants, whether they pay rent or own long leases. Without action, it warns, the problems will grow worse. The government is likely to take heed and move to implement many of the committee's recommendations. The lot of the flat-dweller should, before long, be a happier one.

Any legislation potentially will affect large numbers of people. The 1981 census showed more than 400,000 households in England and Wales living in privately-owned, purpose-built blocks of flats. Nearly 250,000 of them owned long leases and 45 per cent of the total lived in Greater London.

Most of the properties have been standing for many years, their age alone multiplying the management problems which they create. Two major waves of flat-building in the last years of the 19th century and during the 1930s saw purpose-built developments springing up around the country. By the outbreak of the Second World War, at least 1,300 blocks had been built in the capital alone.

Private rental flats proved popular with residents and equally popular with investors, particularly the insurance companies. But from the mid-1960s onwards the situation was to change dramatically, with rising costs and rent restrictions forcing many traditional, residential investment landlords out of the market.

Rapid inflation in property prices and the ready availability of finance meant that, by the early 1970s, the freehold interests of blocks of flats were being traded speculatively, changing hands several times over. Invariably, they fell into

the grasp of owners more interested in short-term capital gains than in good landlord-tenant relations or the maintenance of property assets.

The "break-up" merchants, selling individual flats at the highest prices, had a field day, leaving behind them a web of conflicting interests calculated to intensify management problems. Their activities continue, along with catalogues of other questionable practices, some of which will be neatly nipped in the bud if Nugee gets its way.

Under the proposals, landlords would be obliged to have an address in England or Wales where residents can contact them. If they sold the freehold, they would have to notify tenants; failure to do so would leave them liable for the landlord's obligations under the terms of the leases granted on the building. Tenants would, in any case, have the right of first refusal to buy the block.

In highlighting the crucial role of the managing agent, the committee rejects an RICS suggestion that tenants should have the right to challenge an agent's appointment or re-appointment before the courts. It believes the best way of dealing with the undoubted problems caused by some inefficient and/or dishonest agents is to provide a system for their removal at any time by the tenants, subject to a strong enough case being put before the courts. With instant dismissal as a continuously available sanction for bad management, the committee believes jettisoning landlords will think again.

A housing assessor, according to the committee, should be appointed to sort out landlord-tenant disputes over management issues, along the lines of existing small claims procedures. But if tenants become convinced that the landlord, either by himself or through his agent, is persistently unresponsive or unhelpful, then Nugee says the "last resort" remedy is to ask the courts to appoint a receiver and manager to take over running the block.

On the vexed question of service charges, which in London can very easily exceed £1,000 a year, Nugee calls for much tighter control over money paid into service accounts and says that landlords should not be able to demand any payment for expenditure unless he has given proper advance warning that it is likely to arise.

Progress on any of these fronts clearly would help to improve the position of tenants, although there are those who believe the time has come for more dramatic action to kill off the ancient and confusing leasehold system.

Creating freehold flats might be a legally complex affair but the barriers have been overcome successfully in other countries. The Law Commission already has made recommendations that would pave the way for their creation. The Building Societies Association, whose members are faced with the problem of lending on leasehold flats which ultimately become a depreciating asset, also is anxious to see reform. The Lord Chancellor's officials now are studying the options.

Michael Cassell

Tyndall takeover

A plan that suits everyone

THE INSTANT reaction from one investment adviser to the planned takeover of the Tyndall group by the US-based Aetna Life company was: "It will do them a lot of good, give the group a much needed shot in the arm."

His advice to investors with Tyndall is to hold on and hope for the best. In fact things could get distinctly better for holders of Tyndall unit trusts in particular who have suffered from lean years recently.

The deal, announced this week, is yet to be finalised between Aetna and the current owners of Tyndall, the Globe Investment Trust. But the purchase price of £35m has already been agreed and there seems little reason why it should not go through.

The takeover seems to suit everyone. Globe say it is keen to concentrate on developing wholesale fund management and pull out of the retail market. Aetna Life like other US life companies, wants to enlarge its share of business on this side of the Atlantic. For Tyndall and its investors the backing of a \$51bn (far dwarfing even the biggest UK life companies) should be advantageous in the years ahead.

Mr Brian Peppercall, chairman of the Tyndall group said: "We can't stay in the middle ground. These days you have to be either small and specialist or big. The bigger resources provided by Aetna will enable us to expand our services, add depth on investment and taxation advice."

Tyndall manages some £700m of investment funds. In the UK unit trust industry it was the 22nd biggest management group in 1983 making it top of the second division funds with between £100m and £200m. But Tyndall was one of the only two unit trust groups to contract in

1984 (the other was Save & Prosper) during an expansionist period that is bringing a lot more powerful players into the game.

It also manages some £200m in offshore funds that are held primarily by UK expatriates and English-speaking residents in Commonwealth countries.

Tyndall is licensed to take deposits and its banking services account for around £200m, with more than 50 per cent overseas. It has offices in the Bahamas, Bermuda, Cyprus, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man. It claims to be the first company in the UK to offer a high interest bank account, giving money market rates, while at the same time offering cheque book facilities.

In addition to diversifying into banking and overseas, the group also went into life assurance, which accounts for a further £125m out of the total funds under management.

Nevertheless Tyndall, which was set up in 1962 by a prominent Bristol firm of chartered accountants to provide an investment service for their clients, is very much linked with its original unit trust business, especially the capital and income funds which were star performers in the 1970s.

Since then 16 more funds have been added — too many in the view of some observers — but the performance has been distinctly below average in recent years. Tyndall's name does not feature prominently in the lists of best performers carried regularly by Money Management.

Mr Peter Hargreaves, of Bristol-based investment advisers, Hargreaves Lansdowne, commented that they had "little confidence" in the



Brian Peppercall: giving up the middle ground

performance of the Tyndall funds. He thought the takeover by Aetna would give them a chance to "weed out the rubbish" and benefit from the investment experience available from MIM (Montague Investment Management) which the Midland Bank sold to Aetna earlier this year.

Mr John Greener, of Richards Longstaff, another Bristol-based investment group, was a little more complimentary. He said the proposed takeover was a logical step they did not have much money invested with Tyndall although they had put in substantial amounts in the early 1970s.

Mr Peppercall admitted that the performance of the group's unit trusts had been "rather dull" recently after having enjoyed good spells in the past. They had been putting more emphasis on developing the banking deposit services and overseas business.

However, Tyndall was a nicely balanced business and the backing of a group with major resources like Aetna would enable them to "put more flesh on it" and provide a fuller service, he said.

John Edwards

This advertisement does not constitute an invitation to subscribe for shares

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NAME

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TSL (Daytime)

Think twice before cashing in your MIPs

George Graham reviews MIPs—Maximum Investment Plans—on their 10th anniversary

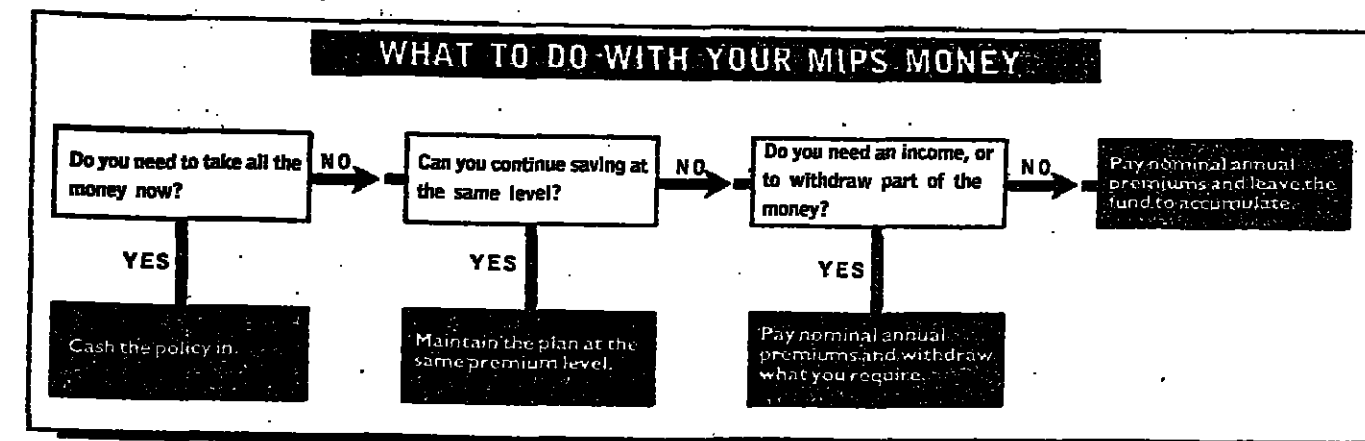
TEN YEARS of saving are about to bear fruit for thousands of people. They will be able to reap the tax-free benefits of the Maximum Investment Plans—technically insurance policies, in reality pure investments—they started before 1976.

In that year, the Government altered the rules governing these policies, raising the amount of life insurance needed for them to qualify as MIPs. Unlike the abolition of Life Assurance Premium relief last year, this change was signalled in advance; so insurance companies rushed to sell tens of thousands of these unlinked policies before the deadline.

After keeping up their savings for a full 10 years, savers will be able to cash in their Maximum Investment Plans—or MIPs—free of tax or penalties. And with the rising stock markets behind them, they could be sitting on over £1bn between them. They may be better off doing nothing.

If you took out a MIP for £50 a month in 1976 and invested in an average insurance company's managed fund, you would now be sitting on an £11,500 cash pot. If you cashed the UK equity fund you would have done better, with £13,500 now accumulated; though any unwise enough to have chosen the property fund would be licking their wounds with only £9,500.

Heavy charges and initial commissions have eaten into this performance. By comparison, investing £50 a month for ten years in the median UK general unit trust would have netted you over £16,000, while a general international fund



would have returned £12,600. You might have to pay capital gains tax on this, however.

All the same, you have worked for ten years to get the MIP's tax advantages. Do not now throw them away lightly.

The decision tree gives a simplified guide to your choices. Your first option is to cash in the MIP, but there is little sense in doing this unless you really want the money now—to help with a house purchase, for instance. "You would be crazy to cash it in if you don't want the money for anything else," commented one financial adviser.

If you do decide you need the money, make sure you wait till after the tenth anniversary of your policy before cashing in.

Option 2 is to keep on saving through your MIP. Ten years bring the MIP into its full tax-free status, but the policies were, in fact, written to cover your whole life, so there is no problem about continuing with the plan.

So long as you do not increase your premiums you will continue to receive Life Assurance Premium Relief—a 17.5 per cent bonus from the

taxman. In addition, you have already paid your way through the initial commission and charges barrier, and several of the insurance companies start to give you more units for your money from the tenth anniversary.

Hambro Life—now Allied Dunbar—has around 9,000 savers in its Variable Investment Plans, with a total of £80m to £100m built up between them. They will receive 105 per cent unit allocations from their tenth anniversary, while savers with Hill Samuel's Maximum Investment Policies will see their unit allocation rise to 103 per cent.

The other options are not quite so simple. If you want to stop saving and start drawing an income from your investment, or simply leave it to accumulate until you need it, a little care is needed to avoid losing your MIP's tax free status.

If you simply stop paying contributions, you could lose a lot of flexibility. With some plans, converting into a "paid up" policy like this will lose you the option of making par-

tial withdrawals. If you need some money next year, it is all or nothing. Moreover, you could risk your qualifying status if you switch between funds, which might mean an additional tax bill in years to come.

By paying a nominal premium, however, you can keep the MIP in force. Most groups, such as Allied Dunbar, or Hill Samuel, will allow you to drop to only £1 a year. You can then withdraw money from your MIP fund, whether as a regular income or as irregular cash payments.

Some policies, however, are written in such a way that they only permit premiums to be reduced to half their current level, not to £1. To allow investors to draw an income, groups such as Trident expect to introduce a variation known as a reinvestment bond. If you transfer the whole of the proceeds of your qualifying MIP into the reinvestment bond, you can also transfer the tax privileges, and then draw a tax-free income.

Caution is needed. If, for instance, you have taken out a

loan secured against your MIP, you may be required to repay some of the money from your MIP proceeds. You cannot then put the remaining MIP money into a reinvestment bond; once again, it is all or nothing.

So check with your financial adviser or with the insurance company that you are not jeopardising the qualifying tax status of your MIP policy.

The tenth anniversary of your MIP makes a good opportunity for reviewing your financial planning. For instance, you could make use of the MIP proceeds to improve your pension arrangements, whether to fund additional voluntary contributions to your company scheme or, in some circumstances, as a lump sum for your personal pension plan. You would get full tax relief on these contributions.

Or you could use the money in planning your Capital Transfer Tax affairs—by giving the MIP fund in trust to your heirs, perhaps, or by drawing an income from it to pay the premiums on a life assurance policy that will pay your heirs' eventual CTT bill.

Platinum — a unique investment

Platinum is one of the rarest metals on earth and one of the most valuable. It is produced in exceptionally small quantities and the total world output is only around 80 tonnes annually, compared with about 1,200 tonnes of gold.

Much of the platinum produced is used in a rapidly growing range of high technology applications and a significant proportion is made into jewellery. Consequently the metal is always in demand. It is also a readily tradeable commodity.

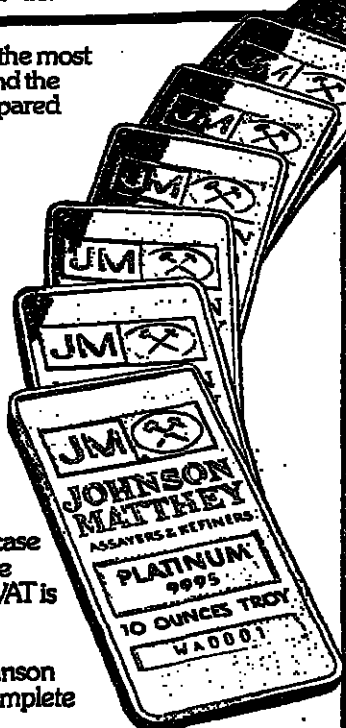
Now Johnson Matthey platinum bars are available to the private investor.

Of course, like any other investment, the value of platinum can fall as well as rise, particularly in the short term. But the price in sterling has nearly quadrupled during the past decade and over a similar period it has easily outperformed inflation, too.

Johnson Matthey platinum bars are produced in eight sizes up to 10oz troy, each one being individually numbered.

You can take possession of the bars in the UK, in which case VAT must be charged. Alternatively, they can be held in safe keeping at our vaults in Jersey or Zurich, in which case no VAT is payable on the value of the bars.

Should you wish to sell your bars we guarantee to repurchase them at any time. For full information on Johnson Matthey platinum bars, and an application form, simply complete and send the coupon by Freepost.



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Platinum Marketing Department, Freepost, London N14 6BR
Telephone: 01-882 6111 Extension 2136 (also 24-hour answering service 01-882 0661)

FT5

JOHNSON MATTHEY

Christmas gift portfolio

IF EBENEZER SCROOGE were alive today he wouldn't be sitting there counting his money. He would be making it grow and grow. Assuming you do not share his lack of charity, there are many gifts you could give your friends this Christmas to help them make their money grow.

For the more financially sophisticated among them a subscription to the Prestel City Service would be a real status symbol. You could pay for a year's subscription to Prestel, amounting to £26 for the personal user. Subscribers will then pay as and when they use it.

First of all there is a time charge of 6p a minute. Then the CityService itself costs 7p a page for stock market information and comment, 12p a page for the commodity and foreign exchange markets. Each time a new page is called up an additional charge is clocked up. For £25 a go users can also get an instant valuation of their own share portfolio, the cost covering one page of ten holdings.

But to give such a present the recipient has first to get access to Prestel. You are unlikely to want to foot the bill for that—£95 to £375 to adapt a television set, £90 to £260 to do the same for a micro computer or £600 or more for a dedicated terminal incorporating its own screen and keyboard.

For the less organised investor the ideal present could be either The Shareholder or Shareholder's File. The first is intended to keep a record of an investor's portfolio. Inside the case there is room for records of 20 individual holdings—shares, gilts or commodities. Constant information, such as details of the purchase date and price, company name, etc, are recorded direct onto gold or buff cards—gold for more stable holdings and buff for more volatile shares.

The cards, which can be replaced and repositioned as required, are stored in individual channels. They are overlaid with a clear plastic cover on to which fluctuating data such as current prices, highs, lows, can be recorded and updated with a special pen. The system also includes "stop loss" indicators to lessen the downside risk on volatile shares. The

case, which costs £49.95, is available from Investors Supplies (061 985 2812). The deluxe version, The Shareholder costs £75.95.

The same company also markets the more basic Shareholder File for keeping investment papers in order. This is simply a ring binder of 20 clear reinforced plastic pockets into which all relevant paperwork relating to a particular investment can be stored. Each pocket is fronted with a record sheet the top of which keeps track of purchases and sales and the bottom records dividends and tax credit. This costs £14.95.

Another practical present would be one of the investment guides. Unfortunately one of the best books for the serious investor, Interpreting Company Reports and Accounts by Geoffrey Holmes and Alan Sugden, published by Woodhead-Faulkner, is out of print and a new edition will not be available until the end of February. So too is the Which Book of Saving and Investing and there are no plans for a reprint. The Which tax and insurance books are still available, however, each costing £12.95.

Good alternatives are chartered accountants Robson Rhodes' Personal Financial Planning Manual—the second edition is just in the shops and costs £15.95—Allied Dunbar's Investment Guide, in its sixth edition and costing £10.95. The FT publishes two guides—Investing for Beginners by Daniel O'Shea (formerly Guinness Pleasure) and Investor's Guide to the Stockmarket by Gordon Ummings. Both cost £8.75 but unlike the others are only available by mail order from the Publications and Marketing Dept, 102 Clerkenwell Road, London EC4M 5SA. In a lighter vein is former FT journalist Rosemary Burr's 100 Money Saving Ideas which costs £2 at any bookshop and her new Share Book at £5.99.

A financial variant of the personal loose leaf filing system has been produced by Lefax Publishing for the

Economist. At £55 the Economist Organiser includes a special edition of their pocket diary and an "essential information pack." Additional information packs at £6 each are Business Britain 1986 and Business World 1986. Available from the Economist or from London Wood Publishing, 9 Murray Street, London NW1.

Less practical but perhaps more fun would be one of the "alternative" investments such as coins, busts, bonds or old banknotes. But with the exception of coins these cannot really be considered to be investments unless your friend is a collector (a scrippophile in the case of old bond and share certificates). Coins have also lost some of their attractiveness since the imposition of VAT unless held outside Britain in somewhere like the Channel Islands. You pay a premium of around 6 per cent above the precious metal's market price even for coins costing as much as £250.

You could, of course, buy shares for your investor friend—shares in those companies which offer special perks to their shareholders. Most people know about the 50 per cent discounts offered by European Ferries to their shareholders. Less well known, perhaps is that Becham Group offers discounts of up to 19.3 per cent on cases of wine, the Burton Group discounts of 20 per cent on three purchases and 12.5 per cent at Debenhams stores. Gieves shareholders get a 20 per cent discount on clothes and shoes and Sketchley which normally offers 25 per cent discounts on cleaning and shoe repairs, is doubling the discount in January and February to mark its centenary year.

Others which offer discounts are Grand Metropolitan, Hawley Group, Pentos Group and London European Airways but to get a full list of shareholders perks send a stamped addressed envelope to stockbrokers Grevson Grant and Co, Barrington House, 59 Gresham Street, London EC2P 2DS.

Margaret Hughes

Expanding on beer

BEER DRINKERS have always claimed that their tipple is altogether more wholesome stuff than wine. Now they have the opportunity to demonstrate their ethical superiority, through the Business Expansion Scheme.

A string of wine companies has exploited the BES tax concessions until the Inland Revenue's patience snapped; it began to clamp down on companies which relied on the appreciation in value of wine stocks for their profits, rather than on real trading activity.

Now investors are offered a chance to put their money into a brewery which—astonishingly for a BES company—employs 42 people already, and hopes to create at least another 18 jobs. Hoskins Brewery, based in Leicester, is aiming to raise up to £2.1m under the Business Expansion Scheme.

Hoskins has fallen a long way from its zenith in the 1920s and 1930s, when it won medals and gold plates for its strong ale. It slipped into losses under the

but was taken over, in 1983, by the two Hoar brothers who have renovated the brewery and bought more pubs through which to sell Hoskins beer.

With four pubs in and around Leicester, and one more in London, Hoskins sports £1.18m of tangible fixed assets in its pro-forma balance sheet. The directors also say the extra outlets for their beer will allow them to increase output from 10 barrels a week, when they took it over, to 55 or 60 barrels a week, without raising overhead costs.

The Hoar brothers will control 30 per cent of Hoskins if the issue is fully subscribed, but they have not awarded themselves attractively priced share options. A normal share option scheme for all employees will be put to a vote of shareholders.

Sponsors to the issue are Oceana Asset Management, an associate of London stockbroker Charles Stanley. Minimum investment is £600, and the offer closes on January 10.

George Graham

The Eagle Star UK Growth Trust

A new unit trust seeking growth opportunities in the shares of UK companies

The UK stockmarket is the third largest in the world—so the range of investments available to investors is extensive.

In fact, there are some 2,000 UK companies quoted on the stock exchange—and more than 300 others quoted on the relatively new Unlisted Securities Market.

They range from the relatively low risk "blue chip" shares to the higher risk—and greater potential rewards—of smaller and more adventurous companies.

There are companies at every stage of development; from the very newest companies in the high-tech industries and fast growing sectors of the economy—to older companies with roots going back as far as the Industrial Revolution.

From this wealth of opportunities, experienced investment managers can identify companies that are under-rated by the market—so that, as time goes by, and a more general realisation of their own worth becomes apparent, substantial capital gains can be made.

A team of experts to manage your money

When you invest in the UK Growth Trust, you will be entrusting your money to the experienced hands of Eagle Star's team of full-time professionals—who manage total worldwide assets of more than £5,500 million. They will constantly monitor the performance of the Trust's holdings and take whatever action they believe will produce the best possible return for investors.

Price and yield: Units will be allocated at the "buying" price ruling on the day of receipt of your application. As a guide the "buying" price of units in this Trust on 28th November 1985 was 29.5p and the estimated gross annual income was 2.5%.

No hidden charges: Initial costs are met by a charge of 5% which, together with a rounding adjustment of up to 1%, is taken into account in the calculation of "buying" and "selling" prices. Normally there is a 6½% difference between these prices. Ongoing costs are met by a charge, currently 0.5% plus VAT per year (the Trust Deed allows a maximum of 3%), deducted from the Trust's income.

Income: As the aim of this Trust is the maximum possible growth all income will automatically be reinvested in the Trust on your behalf.

Following the progress of your investments: We will send you a Contract Note within 14 days and a Certificate within 28 days. Both of these will state the number of units you have bought. Unit prices will be shown in the Daily Telegraph, The Times and the Financial Times.

The unique "Rainbow" approach

All Eagle Star unit trusts have been colour-coded to tell you the degree of risk—and potential reward—that they carry. For this purpose, we have used the colours of the rainbow as a scale—ranging from violet as the most secure, to red as the most adventurous.

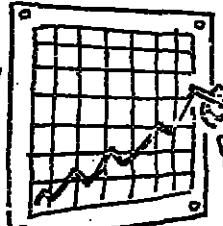
The UK Growth Trust is "Rainbow-rated"...

MEDIUM RISK



As with any investment of this nature, the price of units—and the income from them—must be expected to fall from time to time, as well as rise.

You can cash-in or add to your investment at any time



Although you should regard this Trust as a medium to long term holding, you can sell your units whenever you wish. Of course, if you don't wish to sell all your units, you won't have to. You can simply cash-in what you need, provided that you leave at least £500 or more invested.

Additional Information

Capital gains tax: Unit trusts are not subject to capital gains tax. Moreover, when you sell your units, you will not have to pay this tax unless your total realised gains in the tax year exceed the tax-free threshold, which is currently £2,900.

Income Tax: Tax at the basic rate is deducted from the Trust's income before it is reinvested for you by the managers. If you are not liable to basic rate tax, you can reclaim the amount deducted. If you only pay tax at the basic rate, you will have no further tax to pay. If you are a higher rate taxpayer, you will have to pay the additional rate of tax on it.

Trustee: Midland Bank Trust Company Limited.

Managers: Eagle Star Unit Managers Limited, Registered Office, 1 Threadneedle Street, London EC2R 8BE.

Registrar: The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc.

You can also increase your investment (by £200 or more) whenever you wish.

The Trust's objective

The aim of this Trust is to achieve higher than average capital growth by investing in the shares of a small number of carefully selected UK companies.

Approximately three-quarters of the Trust will be invested in "special situations" which may include securities quoted on the Unlisted Securities Market as well as shares of companies just beginning to show growth potential.

How to invest

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Surname _____
Forename(s) _____
Address _____
Postcode _____

If the holdings are to be in joint names, please give full names and addresses of the other joint holders (maximum of 3) on a separate sheet of paper.

Signature(s) _____ Date _____

Please send details of your Share Exchange Service for unit trusts. ☐

Name and address of Financial Adviser (if any) _____

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Eagle Star Group

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Telephone: 0242 521311

The information contained in this advertisement is based upon Eagle Star's understanding of current law and Inland Revenue practice.

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Pension package

Eric Short on a new plan to help the retired make their funds go further.

THE growth of private pensions, since the Second World War is now resulting in many people retiring with an income similar to that while working. This has two implications that financial institutions have been slow to recognise.

Retired people often continue to have cash available for savings and are becoming an increasingly important group in this scene.

They are in a position to meet interest payments on a mortgage after retirement, so there is no longer the same pressure to have it paid off by the time they stop work. There also is no bar to taking out a fresh mortgage if the proper terms can be worked out.

One institution that has made a positive move to take advantage of this changed situation is a leading building society, National and Provincial, with its new Retirement Package.

The savings needs of the retired are varied. Many require their capital to produce an income and some still look for capital growth, even though the benefit is more likely to be reaped by their children. So, the first part of the Retirement Package brings together existing savings contracts to meet the needs of regular income,

capital growth, or a combination of both.

The second part of the package offers mortgage facilities to the retired, or those near to retirement, to buy a home. Advances would be up to two-thirds the value of the house on an interest-only basis.

This means the retired can retain the major part of the capital released by selling their existing house and are not burdened by having to set aside money for the mortgage. This is repaid when the property is sold or transferred to another person—usually after death.

If the retired couple have problems of delay between sale and purchase, National and Provincial can arrange a bridging loan. And even if they intend to stay put in their old house, the new package offers a mortgage on an interest-only basis for improvements and alterations to make the property suited better for the needs of the elderly.

However, these services are not being offered to the retired on a blanket basis. Unlike mortgage applications from younger people (which these days are processed virtually on a conveyor belt principle) the couple will be interviewed and counselled by their branch manager to ensure they understand what they are doing and that their retirement income will meet commitments.

This second point is important because if the company pensioner dies first—usually, the husband—then the pension for the surviving spouse is reduced by half.

The third part of the package recognises that as far as retired people are concerned the world is still very much in two parts—those with a company pension and those who must rely solely on the state for an income that is anything but adequate. If they own the property in which they live, but need to boost their income, then the package offers a home-income facility called an annuity loan.

It is rather a hybrid scheme at present but National and Provincial offers the householder, who must be at least 70 (or a combined age of at least 150 for a couple) an interest-only mortgage. The person concerned has to buy an annuity, although the society would advise on the best ones.

Normally, the home owner would get a fixed income from the annuity, out of which would be paid mortgage interest that is variable as market conditions change. This is all very well if interest rates are falling, but a rise can reduce income drastically.

National and Provincial accepts this weakness and intends to launch an orthodox home-income scheme early next year, with fixed interest payments on the mortgage, following pressure from branches.

The society insists, however, that any applicant must have the situation explained fully and will possibly be advised to wait until the new scheme becomes available.

Understanding Reports and Accounts



All above board

THE JOURNEY in search of clear information through a set of published accounts starts with reading the directors' report. A directors' report is required to be included in the accounts by law; much of the information also being prescribed. A company must, for example, tell its shareholders who the directors are, and the extent of their personal shareholdings in the company, both at the beginning and at the end of the year. If the directors have any personal interests in contracts with the company these must be disclosed here.

The whole business of appointing directors is the responsibility of the shareholders; they appoint them, and they have the right to remove them. A director has a very special relationship with the shareholders of the company. It is to him or her that you delegate the power and authority to run the company; it is in the board of directors that you place your trust to ensure that the company trades as its owners require it to, and within the confines of the law. For this reason it is the directors, not the shareholders, who can be fined for failing to comply with company law.

The directors' report must also give information about major changes in the business, either through purchasing places of equipment, land or buildings, or through changes in trade. Reading the directors' report, therefore, will give more background information and suggest some key areas to examine in the accounts proper.

It is important to realise, though, that although the directors' report is scrutinised by the auditor, it is not part of the information contained therein written in the directors' report, too, is information about any research and development of a significant nature that the company has undertaken.

This may be a first insight into the possible future profits of the company, and perhaps future trend for growth. Most of the information in the directors' report is merely selected highlights from the actual annual accounts, but there are some bits of information that feature nowhere else in the accounts. Here, for example, the company's policy towards its employees has to be described; particularly health and safety at work, and employment of disabled people. Here, too, the company's charitable donations and contributions to the funds of political parties must be disclosed.

The final piece of information disclosed in the directors' report is about the auditors. If the auditors disagree with the information contained in the directors' report they have the right to inform all shareholders of these views, and to make a presentation at the annual general meeting. Of course this does not happen very often. It would signify a very serious breach of confidence between the directors and the auditor were such a presentation to be made. Normally a shareholder can take comfort from the fact that the auditors "express themselves willing to stand for re-election."

The words "true and fair" are used by auditors to express their belief that the

accounts of any company are correct and that they give an accurate picture of the business of the company during the period under report.

The audit team attend personally at the company. They examine the accounting records to try to establish their accuracy. They do not examine every entry in the books, but work with systems, testing to ensure that they are able to make valid judgements. Once they have made their judgements they decide what kind of audit report to write to the members or shareholders.

If the auditors find that there are certain matters that they do not feel are correct, or if they feel that assumptions need an explanation, they will qualify the audit report. Often the accounts of small companies contain the following sentence: "The company's accounts have been drawn up on a going concern basis subject to the continued support of the Bank." This means simply that the Bank decides not to support the company, perhaps call in its overdraft funding, then the company will have to cease to trade because it will not have enough finance to continue. When a "going concern" status is mentioned in the audit report there is an inference that it is dependent upon some other factor. To be a going concern simply means that the company is able to continue trading from one year to another. (That is not a certificate often seen on quoted companies' accounts.)

From time to time, however, the auditors will disagree with the directors of quoted companies about certain accounting practices. If the disagreement is significant the auditor may present a report which draws attention to it. It will say: "With this exception of (and here it will detail the problem) the accounts give a true and fair view." This is not a major qualification, merely an indication that there has been an area of disagreement and that in respect of that matter only the accounts may not be quite accurate.

In certain cases the matter of disagreement may be of a major, and very serious, kind. In that case the auditors will give an adverse opinion on the accounts. They will describe the problem and will say: "In view of the significant effect of... in our opinion the accounts do not give a true and fair view of the company's affairs at..."

The auditors' report should tell shareholders where to look for any special problems or give the comfort that the accounts can be read secure in the knowledge that an independent third party has checked the accounts and found them to be correct.

Next week: Accounting conventions.

Jane Allan

CHESS

IF CHESS by post is successful, why not chess by telephone?

The snag here is the absence of a mutually agreed written record to settle disputes and mishearings. Rules for the BCF's national club championship sponsored by Legal & General include provisions for telephone matches when opposing teams are hundreds of miles apart, but experience has also made it necessary to have safeguard procedures and neutral umpires to check the positions and clock times.

There are six games in a match in the L & G knockout, but the unsolved problem is how to organise an individual tournament by telephone. The latest idea, from West Germany, is that players advise their moves to a central number instead of communicating direct. This creates an independent record to settle disputes, and avoid having to agree fixed calling times with each oppo-

nent. Groups of 10 players meet in a one move a day all-play-all. The event can be speeded up further by making several moves at weekends.

Chess by telex also continues to flourish in the European inter-city series of twinning matches. London, Lanark and Leeds are all taking part with co-operation from local media. After beating Tilburg and drawing with Amsterdam, London had two matches in the third round — with another Dutch city, Eindhoven, and with the first East European entrant, Belgrade.

London's moves are decided by a panel of experts and broadcast each morning on LBC between 7.23 and 7.30. The latest position against Eindhoven (Belgrade resigned early) is displayed on a board outside the library at the Barbican Centre, where the first correct suggestion for the next move each day qualifies for a pair of tickets to a Barbican cultural event.

A win by Britain's leading postal grandmaster in the tenth world championships;

White: R. Kauranen (Finland). Black: K. B. Richardson (Britain).

Pirc Defence (world postal final 1983-84).

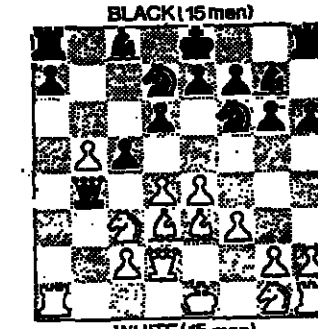
1 P-K4, P-KN3; 2 P-Q4, B-N2; 3 N-B3, P-Q3; 4 B-K2, N-KB3; 5 N-B3, Q-Q3; 6 P-K3, P-Q3; 7 B-K2, N-KB3; 8 Q-Q1, B-Q2; 9 P-Q3, N-K4; 10 P-KN3, P-Q3; 11 N-O2, N-KB3; 12 P-QN3, P-Q3; 13 B-B3, P-QN3; 14 P-QN4, P-KR4; 15 Q-K2, N-KB3; 16 P-QN4, P-KR4; 17 N-N3, N-N5; 18 N-N1, P-KB4; 19 P-P3, P-P3; 20 B-N5, B-KB3; 21 B-B3, N-B3; 22 B-N2, Q-B2; 23 Q-Q2, K-R2; 24 N-R5, R-KN1; 25 P-QB4, P-P3.

Black's king side attack has developed much faster than White's ponderous efforts to open up the other flank. If 26 N-N3, B-N4.

26 N-B3, P-R5; 27 K-R1, Q-R4; 28 Q-K2, N-N5; 29 B-B3, Q-R3; 30 B-N3, R-B3; 31 P-B3, R-N3; 32 P-P3, Q-RN1.

Now Black expected 33 R-KN1, Q-P3; 34 Q-B3, P-B5; 35 Q-BP, N-B4; 36 N-P3, Q-P3; 37 N-N4, N-B4; 38 Q-QB2, K-R1;

37 Resigns. For if 37 K-N1 (to stop N-N6 ch) then N-K3 wins. PROBLEM NO. 596 BLACK (15 men)



WHITE (15 men)

P. Whitehead v D. Edelman, New York international 1985. A typical situation from a King's Indian Defence where White (to move) has a solid pawn centre which Black is trying to undermine from the flanks.

Should White now continue (a) 1 P-Q5 (b) 1 P-P3 (c) 1 K-N2 or (d) another move?

Solution Page XIX

Leonard Barden

FINANCIAL TIMES

is proposing to publish a Survey on
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Publication date: December 16, 1985
Advertising copy date: December 2, 1985

For further details contact:

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Read Executive	8/83	+309	A & P Appliances	10/84	+302
Antilogica Hldgs.	9/83	+355	Microgen	1/84	+201 (17)
Keywest Investments	8/83	+346	Carpels Int.	12/84	+191 (4)
Grattan	6/83	+248 (17)	Consultants (C&F)	10/84	+177
Dee Corp.	5/83	+247	British Telecom	11/84	+157 (3)
Cope Almann	12/83	+240 (18)	Australian Con Mins	2/84	+147
Low & Bonar	9/83	+216	Blue Arrow	8/84	+140
Delta	5/83	+213	Wight Control	2/84	+125
High Point Services	12/83	+207 (16)	Hume Charms	3/84	+125 (19)
Vickers	7/83	+196	Comcap	5/84	+119 (10)
Bovril McConnell	8/83	+190 (25)	1985		
Brifon	8/83	+186 (22)	First Nat. Finance	1/85	+126
Lucas Ind.	11/83	+186	Alexandra Waterways	1/85	+105
Aero Noodles	12/83	+183 (2)	Walker & Horner	7/85	+105
Widenedown Hldgs	10/83	+180 (16)	Assoc. British Ports	1/85	+92 (6)
			British Benzol Carbonising	3/85	+91

(1) = number of months between purchase and sale
(2) = current sale

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Briefcase

A hobby—but still taxable

I am retired and my hobby is sailing. Very occasionally I sell a magazine article about my cruises.

My total earnings from this source amount to no more than £100 to £200 a year. Needless to say there is no question of my making a profit on my hobby.

Do I have to pay tax on these earnings? If so, what expenses are deductible?

First question: Yes, under case VI of Schedule D (or possibly under case II).

Second question: Just the direct expenses, such as paper and postage, plus the appropriate proportion of the cost of typewriter ribbons etc.

residence, the value of which would be reduced by the close proximity of another property?

The gain is not exempted by section 101 of the Capital Gains Tax Act 1979. We are sorry to say you will find a sketchy outline of the rules in a free pamphlet CGT4, which is obtainable from your tax inspector's office. It is rather a pity that you did not ask your solicitor for guidance on the tax aspects during the negotiations with the new owner.

Contact the ombudsman

My mother died almost three years ago leaving a small estate, we estimate about £30,000 and a property attested will; there are seven beneficiaries. Probate was granted in 1983 and the solicitor has made an interim payment of £3,000 to each beneficiary but says he cannot finalise the estate because the Inland Revenue have lost all relevant documents pertaining to our mother's tax position. He enclosed letters from them to that effect and I wrote to them several months ago (13 to be exact) respectfully requesting that they do their best to hasten the process. The solicitor informs us he has written to them continually without success. One of my sisters (a beneficiary) has died since our mother. What course would you advise me to take to let the Inland Revenue into action? We feel the longer this is delayed, the remainder will be eroded by legal costs. Write to your MP, enclosing the copies of the tax inspector's letters which the solicitor sent you, and ask him or her to refer your complaint to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration (the Ombudsman).

The solicitor should be willing to give you an account of the administration of the estate so far, if you explain that it may help your MP's efforts on behalf of the beneficiaries.

CGT due on shop sale

In 1975 I bought a shop property for £4,000 and let it on a 20-year lease. Now I am thinking of selling it to the tenant for £30,000. I had it valued in 1979 at £21,000. Could you tell me what capital gains tax would be payable and also if indexation would have to be on the price I paid

for it or could the 1979 value be used? If so how do I go about it and what proof would the tax inspector need from me?

The Capital Gains Tax payable from the sale of the shop property which you describe would be calculated and assessed on the result of the following calculation.

Disposal proceeds.

Less (a) Original acquisition cost ie £4,000.

(b) Allowable expenditure incurred on the property prior to sale, ie capital improvements.

(c) Expenditure involved in selling the property, ie solicitors' fees etc, and.

(d) Indexation allowance from April 1, 1982 calculated on either the original acquisition cost or the value of the asset, as at March 31, 1982 (generally speaking it is the latter which will give the greater deduction and reduce the gain liable to tax).

You should endeavour to have the property valued as at March 31, 1982, and enquire of your solicitor or accountant as to which basis the gain should be calculated. The Inland Revenue will usually take your word as to the acquisition cost but may require sight of the disposition in your favour. Proof of expenditure will also be required although the Revenue take a fairly relaxed view for reasonable sale expenses.

Denial of due process

Five months ago I handed my bank five certified cheques totalling £40,515. These were all drawn on American banks. I was told that they would take four to six weeks to clear.

The first four cheques actually took 24 months, although the cash had been drawn from the account within three weeks, and I am still waiting the fifth.

I have tried in vain to find out what has happened to my money. I am merely informed that this type of transaction can take this length of time.

Is there any watchdog to whom I can appeal? No, there is no "watchdog" available. You might take the matter up with the directors of your bank, or, alternatively, ascertain by enquiry of other banking institutions whether you might have a claim in negligence against your bank for taking so long to process cheques.

Accounts are late

I live in a leasehold flat, part of a modern block managed by a limited company elected as directors and officers of the company by all the leasehold owners who each own one share in the company.

The directors refused to issue the annual accounts with the statutory notice for the Annual General Meeting and sometimes deliver them only one or two days beforehand.

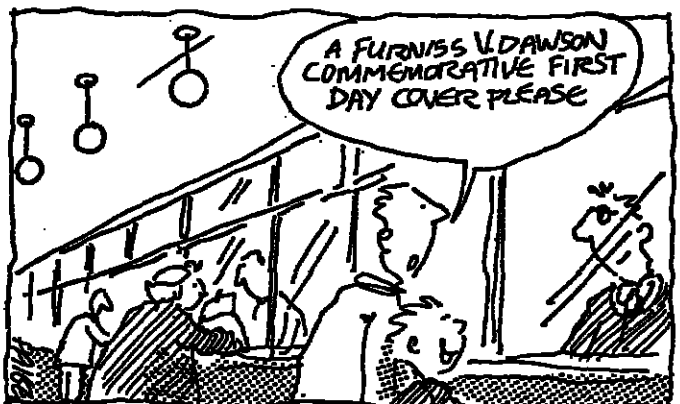
I always understood that accounts should be delivered with the notice of the AGM. Is this correct? And if so, what is the effect of them not being so delivered? What sanctions are available against the directors and officers of the company to rectify this situation?

The accounts must be laid before the annual general meeting, but are not required by law to be delivered to members with notice of the meeting, although that is the general, and no doubt good, practice.

No legal responsibility can be accepted by the Financial Times for the answers given in these columns. All inquiries will be answered by post as soon as possible.

Taxation

Simple matter of a stamp



STAMP DUTY is the oldest tax currently administered by the Inland Revenue. First imposed in 1694 during the reign of William and Mary and with a forced yield of £1.1m for 1985-86, it ranks in significance with taxes such as capital transfer (£760m) and capital gains (£790m).

Compared with these two taxes, however, it is a simple tax, usually requiring little Finance Act space each year, although 1985 was an exception. One reason for its simplicity is that it is not a tax on specific transactions, but on the documents required to give effect to transactions. If you can validly carry out a transaction without using a document, for example by transferring ownership of property by delivery, no duty can arise.

The other unusual aspect of stamp duty is that it is not an assessed tax: the Inland Revenue waits for you to present it with the document to be stamped and the tax to be paid. Its collection costs thus compare favourably with other taxes.

To that extent it is a "voluntary" tax, but the catch is that certain transactions which attract stamp duty liability cannot be effected without the use of a document and if that document is not stamped those benefiting from the transaction may find themselves under a legal disability.

To take the two most obvious examples: if you buy a house you need a conveyance or transfer of the land, and if you fail to stamp the conveyance or transfer you will not be able to establish your title to the land. Similarly, if you take the transfer of shares and do not stamp the transfer, you will be unable to register your title to the shares with the company concerned.

Generally, stamp duty is either a nominal, fixed duty (normally 50p) or is charged at 1 per cent of the value of the transaction. A sale of land or shares or other securities attracts duty at 1 per cent of the sale consideration, and the liability normally falls upon the purchaser rather than the vendor.

In the case of a sale of land, however, no liability to stamp duty arises where the consideration does not exceed £30,000. This exemption does not apply to sales of shares or other securities and is not an exemption of the first £30,000 of any consideration. Thus, a sale for £31,000 attracts a 1 per cent liability on the whole consideration, ie £310.

The tax cannot be avoided by splitting up land into £30,000 blocks. A certificate must be given for the sale stating that it is not part of a larger transaction, the aggregate value of which exceeds £30,000.

It used to be possible to avoid duty on land transferred as a gift by making a series of gifts, none of which exceeded £30,000 in value. With the abolition this year of the 1 per cent stamp duty on gifts such manoeuvres are unnecessary.

From January 1 1986 the procedure for transferring registered land where there is no liability to duty is being simplified. Such transfers may be sent direct to the Land Registry and need no longer be submitted to the Inland Revenue. This new procedure does not apply in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

These points apply equally to a sale of a freehold title to land and the assignment of a leasehold interest for a capital sum. The simplified procedure does not apply, however, where a new lease is created or is agreed to be granted. Here the level of duty depends upon a combination of the length of the lease, the premium payable on its grant and the rent payable over its life.

Where a lease is granted for a premium, the premium will attract 1 per cent duty unless it does not exceed £30,000 and the rent does not exceed £300.

The two favoured ways of minimising liability to stamp duty have been to avoid the creation of a stampable document or to ensure that the value attributable to such a

document is reduced on a combination of both.

Such devices lie behind the "preference share trick" under which, on a sale of a company, the registered shares were reduced in value and attracted little liability on transfer, while new shares carrying all the company's value were issued on transferable allotment letters which were not stampable documents.

The same idea was used for transfers of land under which the value of the interest in land was reduced by entering into an agreement for lease exceeding 35 years at a premium in favour of the purchaser and then selling him or her the remaining interest for a nominal sum. The agreement for lease was not stampable while the transfer of the remaining interest only attracted a minimal liability.

Both the "pref" trick and the agreement for lease scheme have been countered by Parliament in the last two years. The courts have now added their own disapproval by deciding in *Ingram v IRC* that the agreement for lease scheme, at least, was ineffective because the new approach to tax avoidance laid down in *Furniss v Dawson* applied to stamp duty avoidance.

Unless subsequently reversed by a higher court, the *Ingram* decision is retrospective in operation, unlike the legislation introduced to counter the scheme. Those who undertook lease schemes before the *Inland Revenue* challenged them, may therefore be in possession of inadequately stamped conveyances.

In the case of registered land, there is probably no problem if the purchaser has already registered the title. Where the conveyance was submitted to the Inland Revenue for its view on stamp duty liability there is statutory protection against further liability. In other cases purchasers may have to consider whether conveyances should now be stamped in line with the *Ingram* decision.

Malcolm Gammie

document is reduced on a combination of both.

Such devices lie behind the "preference share trick" under which, on a sale of a company, the registered shares were reduced in value and attracted little liability on transfer, while new shares carrying all the company's value were issued on transferable allotment letters which were not stampable documents.

The same idea was used for transfers of land under which the value of the interest in land was reduced by entering into an agreement for lease exceeding 35 years at a premium in favour of the purchaser and then selling him or her the remaining interest for a nominal sum. The agreement for lease was not stampable while the transfer of the remaining interest only attracted a minimal liability.

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Brought to book

ARE YOU paying more tax than you need to? You may not be aware of the allowances to which you are entitled or the legal arrangements that can be made to reduce your tax liability.

Although in recent years there has been a trend towards simplification of the overall tax structure, it is still complicated. The 1985 Finance Act, for example, ran to 242 pages in spite of making few significant changes to the proposals announced in the Budget last March.

Lofthouse Publications, of 29 Ropergate, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, have just published two new editions of long established taxation books, updated to take into account the provisions for the 1985-86 tax year.

Taxation Simplified, in its 73rd edition, is published every spring and autumn, and aims to give at least a basic understanding of the British system with special attention to the small business, whether it is operated by one person, a partnership or a limited company. It gives the information in short, snappy paragraphs that are easy to understand and follow in 111 pages, including a useful index. The cost is £1.95.

Smith's Taxation 1985-86, also published by Lofthouse, is a different proposition. It runs to 683 pages and aims to serve as a comprehensive source of reference. Very detailed, it does also provide working examples of taxation decision, legislation and case law.

Published annually, the latest (89th) edition has also been updated to take into account the changes introduced in the 1985 Finance Act.

A book for the professional rather than the beginner, it costs £12.95.

Dealing in a small way

I have been buying and selling stocks and shares for many years in a small way, but as I have recently been left a number of shares I have been increasing my turnover. I have not made sufficient gains to be liable for CGT but am concerned that HMRC may look at my gains as profits for tax purposes.

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Releasing a covenant

When I purchased my property two years ago the vendor was selling an old barn, just over my wall but only 20 yards from my house, which stands in some 11 acres and is 150 yards plus from the nearest property. To preserve the tranquillity and seclusion the vendor agreed to covenant that the barn would not be developed for any other purpose—ie, as a residence, workshop, etc.

Recently a new owner of the barn has obtained planning permission for conversion into a residence and he has offered me £15,000 to lease the Covenant. This has now been agreed. Am I liable for any Capital Gains Tax bearing in mind that the transaction is connected with my private

Investing abroad

Swiss roll-up

THE Swiss Bank Corporation share index, the key index which represents just over 90 per cent of the Swiss stock market, has increased 66 per cent since January this year to reach record levels.

The growth is set against an economy noted for its relative stability and efficiency. Switzerland has one of the lowest inflation rates in Europe and gross national product is expected to grow by at least 3 per cent this year. Not surprisingly, the Swiss stock market looks forward to a continuing period of growth.

At present Swiss pension funds total about Sfr 150bn (about £48.8bn) accounting for only 4 per cent of the Swiss equity market. However, London broker Grieson Grant estimates that by 2000, they will total Sfr 800bn, of which at least 10 per cent would be invested in shares.

In addition, the number of UK unit trusts investing in European equity markets has trebled in the last two years, and most of them have large parts of their portfolios invested in the Swiss market.

Switzerland draws strength in the longer term from its close economic association with West Germany, its major trading partner.

The Swiss stock market is dominated by a number of large companies. The Swiss banks, including the big four, Swiss Bank Corporation, Credit Suisse, Union Bank of Switzerland and Swiss Volksbank (which recently opened a branch in London), represent 35 per cent of the market index.

Chemicals is the next largest sector, taking up 19 per cent of the index. The top ten of the three Swiss world leaders in chemicals, Ciba-Geigy, Hoffmann-La Roche and Sandoz, their profits this year are running at record levels.

Swiss insurance and energy companies, a growing number of foreign companies and Nestlé, one of the world's largest food producers (taking up 14 per cent of the market index) completes the line-up of major players on the Swiss market.

Private investors wishing to buy Swiss shares directly should be aware that the market is fraught with regulations and restrictions on the kinds of stock available to foreigners.

The market is divided into bearer shares, registered shares and participation certificates. Foreigners may only buy bearer shares, and participation certificates; Swiss residents are able to buy all three varieties.

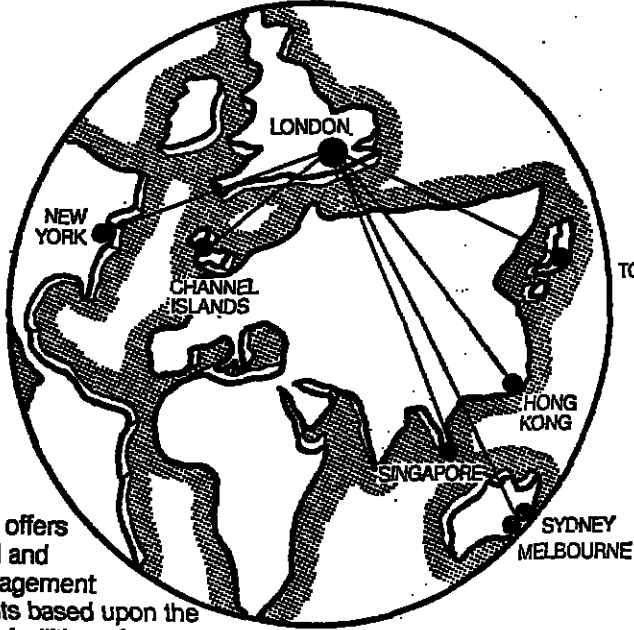
Bearer shares are sold at a higher premium than registered shares, sometimes double the price, and this combined with the Swiss bank's commission (0.7125 per cent) and safe custody fee plus the UK broker's commission (about 1.5 per cent negotiable through a UK broker) makes investing in Swiss shares relatively expensive.

Keep in mind, however, that UK investors in the Swiss market don't have to pay stamp duty or a jobbing fee.

Another drawback for the private investor is the sheer cost of bearer shares. Many stand at around £150 to £200 each while in extreme cases like the shares of Hoffmann-La Roche, they cost thousands of pounds each. "It puts people off who are used to paying 50p shares," said a broker at Hoare Govett in London.

Paul Ham

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Science Parks

There is a renewal of interest in science parks in Britain and other European countries, following the concept that has long proved popular in the US. But the big test for these European schemes is whether technological developments can be successfully translated into new industrial applications

Concept wins new lease of life

By Anthony Moreton
Regional Affairs Editor

FIVE YEARS ago British proponents of the science park concept were almost in despair at the inability or unwillingness of universities to take up the idea that had proved so successful in the US.

Cambridge, through Trinity College, had accepted the initiative put forward in the late 1960s by the then prime minister, Mr (as he then was) Harold Wilson, and was developing the first stage of its park Heriot-Watt in Edinburgh had picked up the suggestion earlier though it was later into development. For the rest, the initiative appeared to have fallen on very stony ground.

Today all that has changed. It is hardly possible to visit a British campus without a science park, or a site for one, being pointed out. Eager to climb on to what is seen to be a lucrative bandwagon, developers and agencies and even large companies proudly parade their offspring—many of them distant from sites of higher learning.

There is equal activity elsewhere in the world. No other single country has yet approached the level of development in either the US, or even the UK but most European industrial countries now have at least one or two parks.

The same is true further east. Singapore has started a park, and neighbouring Malaysia and nearby Thailand hope to do so. Schemes have started in Australia, notably in Perth; Canada has a discovery park attached to the University of Vancouver; and the Japanese have 17 in the pipeline, though only Kumamoto is in operation.

All this is a far cry from the early 1950s when a young Mr Hewlett and a young Mr Packard joined forces on land

made available by Stanford University in California and put the whole show on the road.

The Stanford success, combined with Route 128 around Boston and others in the US, notably the North Carolina research triangle, have persuaded many Europeans, especially in Britain, into believing that science parks could contain the crock of gold at the end of the rainbow. This belief became even more firmly held after 1981 when, in the wake of Government cutbacks in university funding, the colleges had to look elsewhere for part of their income.

We in Britain have tended to be bedazzled by US hype," says Mr Ian Dalton, who runs the Heriot-Watt research park, and who is also chairman of the UK Science Park Association.

"We overlook the fact that many US science parks took a long time to become established, and the movement was by no means an overnight success. Even Stanford, admittedly a very large park of 729 acres, was not filled until 1979.

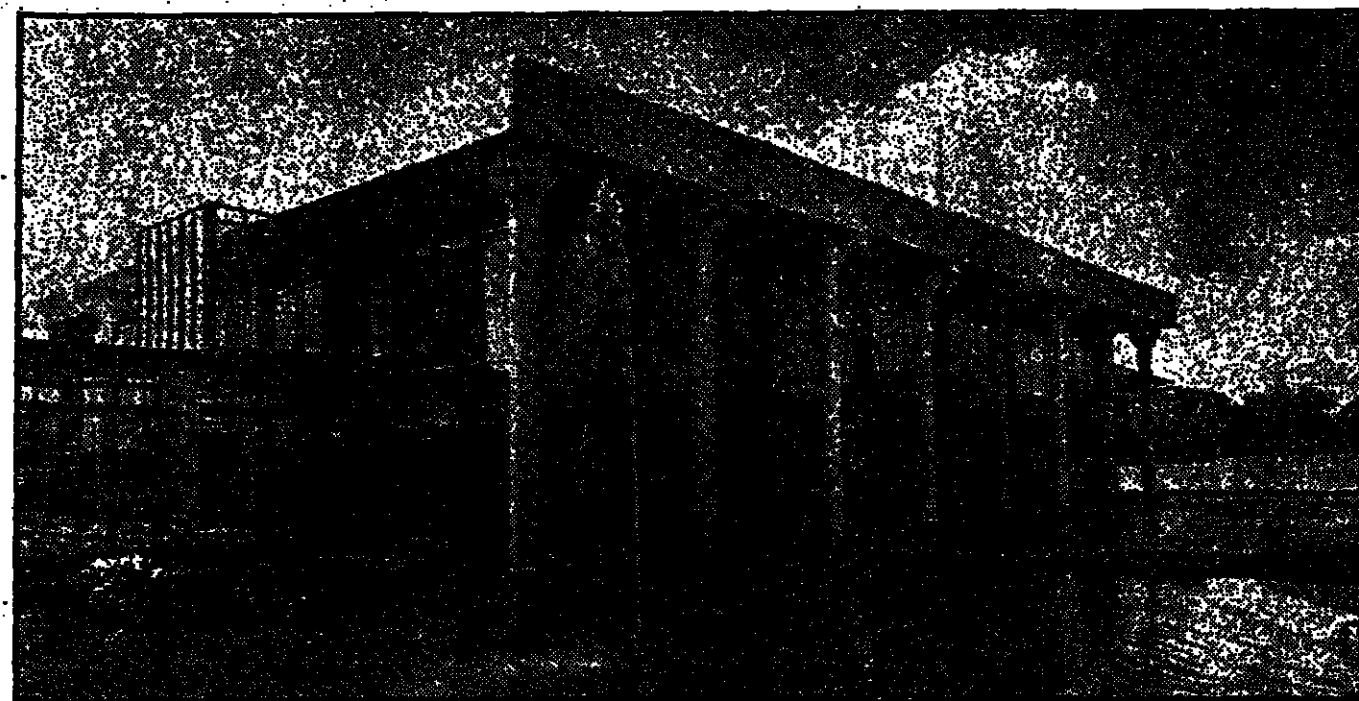
"Others simply have not taken off at all. Stanford has produced an enormous stimulus but at Rome, in New York State, the site remains empty."

Indeed, of the 90 or so parks in the US it has been estimated by American researchers that no more than a quarter are involved in research-related activities. The rest are industrial parks, part of a commercial development allied to a university. Stanford itself started as a way of developing land to the benefit of the university, and now has a number of very large manufacturing concerns on it.

This path is not acceptable to most British university-related science parks.

"Our philosophy is to offer a setting where activities linking university research and industrial application can take place," Mr Dalton says.

"Our own park at Heriot-Watt is not a separate entity from the university. It is one aspect of the technology trans-



Innovative building design at Warrington-Runcorn's Birchwood Science Park. The building was developed by Engineering Polymers

fer that goes on here. If a company on the park gets to the point where it begins to be involved in mass manufacture then we would expect it to move on, to find a larger home somewhere else."

This view is widespread among British science parks. It is not, however, a universal view (the Cambridge park has a couple of large manufacturing concerns) and appears not to be accepted in many European parks. The huge Sofia Antipolis park at Valbonne in France—12 sq miles—is 25 miles from the University of Nice, with which it has few links. Technology transfer is limited.

It is, however, part of a wider dream. The French authorities would like to see the whole of the southern coastline from Toulouse across to Trieste in Northern Italy developed into a super-Silicon valley.

Behind the narrower British definition lies a difference in approach compared with the US and Europe. The universities that have formed the UK Science Park Association have defined a park as being a place where "a collection of high-technology industrial companies or research institutes are situated in attractive, well-landscaped surroundings, developed to a very low density situated near a major scientific university and enjoying significant opportunities of interchange with that university. They are a means of bringing suitable industry and applied

research close to the sources of scientific progress."

Such a definition satisfies Cambridge, Heriot-Watt, Bradford, Aston, Liverpool, Manchester and Warwick, for example, but it leaves other parks not connected to seats of higher education fuming at alleged intellectual elitism.

Viewpoints

Warrington's Birchwood Science Park, the Welsh Development Agency's Deeside Park at Wrexham, the Cadcam Centre at Middlesbrough are seen by their backers as science parks. So, too, are Wavertree in Liverpool, heavily backed by Plessey, and the Mid-Glamorgan High Technology Park at Bridgend, which the county council has funded. According to the association, however, they are not "true" science parks.

Americans are either amused or astonished at such distinctions. If a project pushes forward the frontiers of science or technology, and then turns into a large-scale operation, such as Wang or Polaroid did, so much the better.

The Americans want to develop whole areas, such as around Stanford, or Route 128 around Boston, around Georgia Tech in Atlanta, and in the North Carolina research triangle, in the hope that this will lead to mushrooming employment opportunities at the frontier of technological advance.

Only one such area has

appeared in the UK, around Cambridge, and that has been created more by the centripetal force of the university than the science park itself. What has become known as the Cambridge phenomenon was in existence well before the science park became established.

In Britain the big increase in interest in science parks by British universities in the past four or five years was largely stimulated by the 1981 Government cuts. By 1982 the second wave of parks was coming off the drawing board—Surrey and Southampton among them—and now there is a third wave about to get in on the act—including a second Cambridge park under the aegis of St John's College and a development by Brunel University.

The second wave was different in character to the first, which really only comprised Cambridge and Heriot-Watt. The first were university owned whereas the second tended to be partnerships.

At Warwick, for instance, BL and Barclays were closely associated. Grand Metropolitan is putting Elm into an innovation centre at Surrey and Lloyds Bank is working with Aston. English Estates has very close connections with Bradford, Leeds and Hull, while the Welsh Development Agency was a partner with the park at Aberystwyth and the Scottish Development Agency with five parks.

It is thought there are at least six second-wave parks in existence and more than six, including the first medical park, allied to St Bart's Hospital in London, in the third wave. By the end of 1986 the association expects to have 20 members.

There are, according to Mr Dalton, a further 37 possible parks, including some in university cities, such as Oxford, which are not, or not yet, university linked. Many of these may not survive, however, he believes.

There are a lot more. Some, such as Aztec West near Bristol, are really no more than property developments. Some, such as those associated with Huddersfield Polytechnic or the Bolton College of Further Education, come near to the association's definition and would certainly be included if they were in the US.

What eventually matters, of course, is not how a science park is defined or how it operates but whether it succeeds in pushing forward technology transfer in the UK and elsewhere. Too many inventions, such as liquid crystalography at Hull, or video recorder technology at York, have been turned into industrial advances by the Japanese. If only a slice of this action from the work now being undertaken on parks of all sorts from Aberdeen to Plymouth could be translated into industrial application, the gain would be the British economy.

Forum to consider role of UK developments

THE first conference of the United Kingdom Science Park Association will be held in London next Friday. The conference is intended to be established as an annual event.

The conference, organised in association with accountants Peat, Marwick, will seek to explore the contribution of science parks to the economy—regional as well as national—and consider the property, business support and finance requirements of tenant organisations.

The growing importance of the science parks sector is reflected in the fact that over the past four years 19 parks have been established, according to the UKSPA, and a further 17 are in the planning stage.

The opening address will be given by Lord Young, Secretary for Employment, and subsequent speakers will look at the role of the parks in industrial development, their role in relation to their local authority, developing the right property for the market and financing parks.

The UKSPA was formed in 1984 to act as a national forum for the interchange of information and experience between those most directly involved in the planning and management of those parks having links with a university or institute of higher learning.

There are at present 20 members and associate member

organisations. Peat Marwick has maintained a close involvement with the movement over several years.

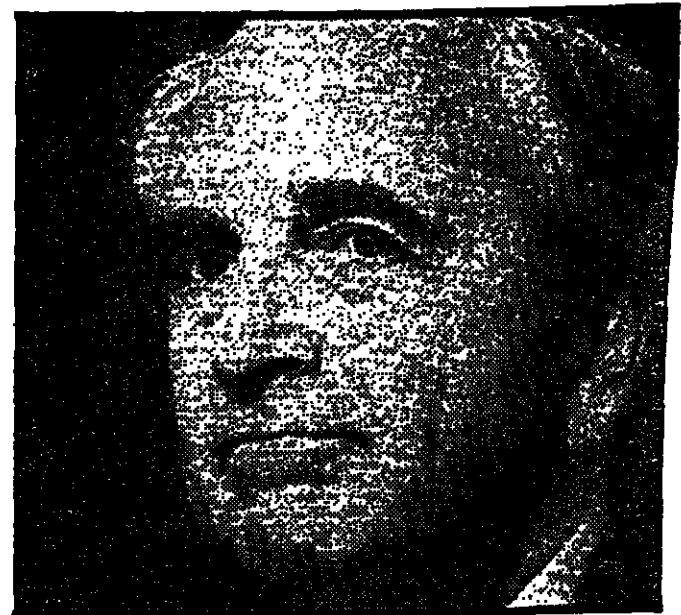
The chairman of the UKSPA is Mr Ian Dalton, of Heriot-Watt Research Park, Edinburgh, and the secretary is Mr David Rowe, of the University of Warwick Science Park, Coventry.

The conference schedule in brief is as follows: 10 am Lord Young. The contribution of science parks to the national economy. Professor Donald Mackay, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh: The growth of science parks and their role in industrial development.

11.30 Ian Page, Bradford: The role of the university and its science park to Bradford's economic strategy. Dr Nick Segal, Segal Quince Wickstead: Science parks—agents for change; Professor Mark Richmond, Manchester University: Our objectives for Manchester science park.

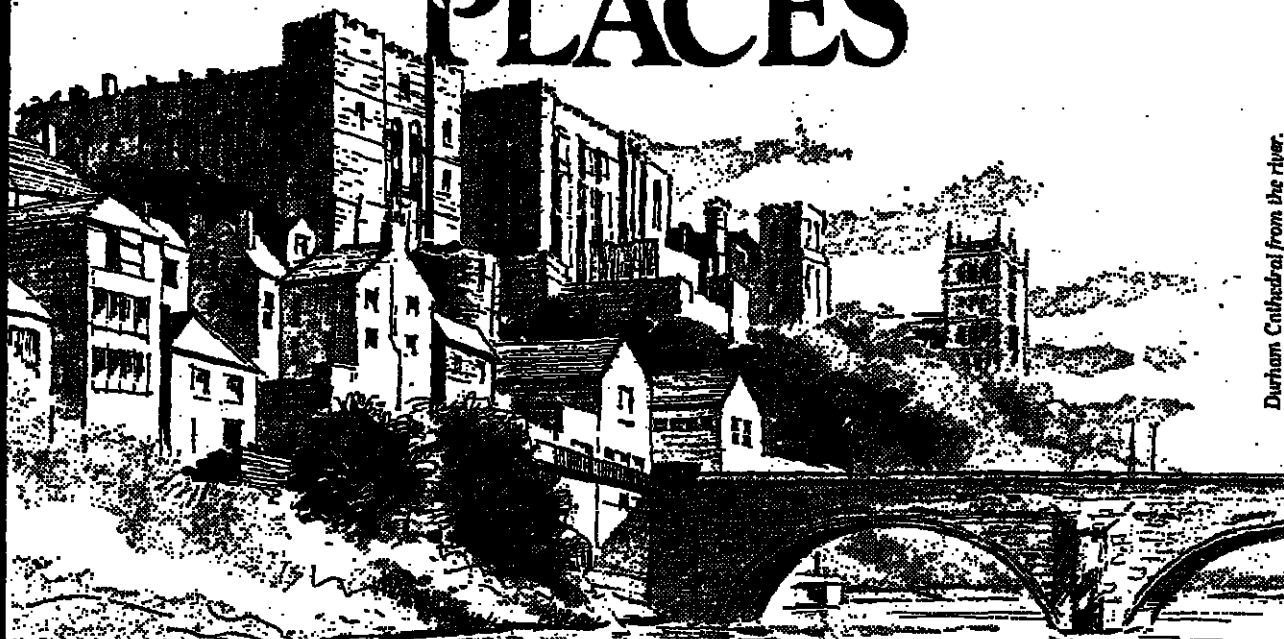
2.15 Tony Pender, English Estates: Developing the right property for the market; David Rowe, Warwick University: Financing the property component.

3.45 Kim Heyworth, Peat Marwick: Finance for science park companies; John Carson, Aston science park: Management support for tenants; Arthur Kummer, Merseyside innovation centre: Finance and management needs of new innovations.



Lord Young: he will highlight the growing contribution of science parks to the national economy at next Friday's conference of the UK Science Park Association

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A report on the state of play at Cambridge Science Park

50 FIFTY UP 50

The rules of what became Association Football were first codified by a representative gathering of students at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1848—two years before Clerk Maxwell entered the College and nearly two centuries after Newton did so. Sadly the College has no close connections with the rules of cricket, but as the high spots of the 1885 cricket season fade into memories, it is pleasant to record that Trinity's 130 acre Cambridge Science Park is scoring strongly and has passed its half century of occupancy. They include in phases 1-3 (82 acres)...

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Fourteen of these companies have expanded their Park premises in recent years.

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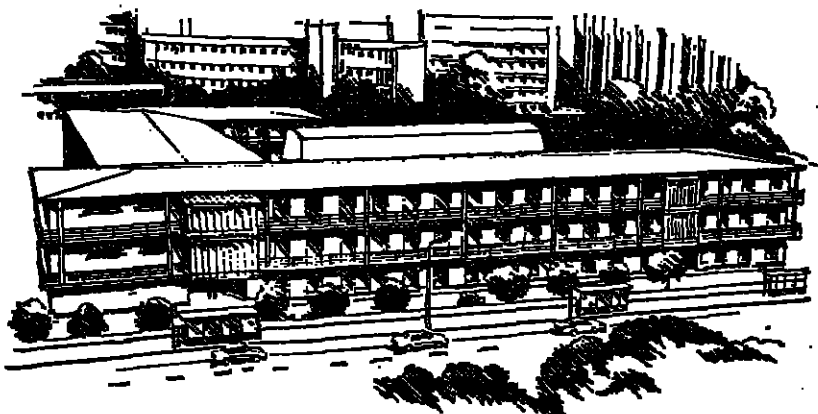
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In Continental Europe there is a fresh awareness of the importance of science parks. Above: Science Park Twente, located at Enschede, Netherlands

US and European comparisons

Contrast in cultural and entrepreneurial values

THERE is a fundamental difference between the science park movement in the US compared to the movement in Europe. The Europeans, particularly the British, take the view that science parks are places where technology transfer is the prime reason for the link between university and company.

If the company on a British science park reaches the point where it begins to become interested in, or involved in, manufacturing processes then many of the parks would want that company to move somewhere else.

In the US the whole object of a science park is to take scientific and technological advance and turn it into commercial reality.

There is a difference of cultural and entrepreneurial values, according to Mr Russell Cox, chairman of MIT Enterprise Forum, of Boston, a noted commentator on the science park scene in the US.

"It is not a matter of Europeans being unable to invent things or produce things. They can do it as well as people in the US," he says.

"What they do not do is turn those inventions into things with the same rapidity. We do not lay down rules about what should or should not be produced on a park. We just believe that if a company can grow, then good luck to it."

The result has been that in the US many of the larger science parks—there are said to be over 80 of them—are not parks at all. They do not have gates through which workers pass, or boundary walls. In many cases American science parks are areas which have been largely taken over by high technology-related concerns.

The most obvious example of this is Route 128, around Boston. The first specific "park" may have been attached to Stanford University, which subsequently spawned into California's silicon valley. But the first area to be developed was undoubtedly the hinterland around Boston's Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The science-park movement expanded very rapidly out of California and Massachusetts. The important factor in the expansion, according to Mr Cox, was not just university association but desirable living environments.

Environments

"Scientific laboratories grow, and science parks succeed, in areas where scientists want to live. The living environments of both Boston and San Francisco include good recreation at nearby oceans and mountains, attractive residential suburbs, a full range of cultural activities, moderate climates and good educational facilities."

It is therefore no surprise that research parks have been successfully established in places such as Orlando, Florida; Austin, Texas; Phoenix, Arizona; the research triangle in North Carolina; and Salt Lake City in Utah.

It is also no surprise that places such as Knoxville, Tennessee; Huntsville, Alabama; and Rome, New York State, have failed to capitalise on their otherwise attractive scientific inducements.

Knoxville had many attractive features and might have been considered a good candidate for a science park. Apart from the university, the atomic research facility at Oak Ridge has been in existence for 40 years. But the town has signally

failed to develop or attract high-technology industry on any significant scale.

A high-class scientifically-inclined university certainly helps attract high-technology industry. MIT is a case in point. The US National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA) put its electronics laboratory next door to MIT. A major Westinghouse research facility and the Naval Training Equipment Centre deliberately chose to be near the Central Florida University.

Such major institutions have a follow-on effect, drawing in other concerns in the same field. According to one report, 50 enterprises in the San Francisco area trace their origins to Fairchild Semiconductor, for example.

American science parks have relied heavily for their successful development on the existence of skilled labour. Many of the older industrial towns, especially in New England, have attracted high-technology concerns largely because they had secure labour following the closure of older-established industries, especially in textiles. Nevertheless, all these factors could have been present and research parks might still not have succeeded, according to Mr Cox, had it not been for the entrepreneurial factor—"We don't look on failure in quite the same light as people in Europe do."

Barriers often prefer people who have failed. It shows character to get up off your knees and try again."

More science parks in the US have probably started and failed than have started and succeeded. But the movement is healthy and is now spawning into new areas with remarkable speed.

TONY MORETON

New European plans

Projects on a grand scale

CONTINENTAL EUROPE has only recently become fully aware of the importance of science parks, but with this awareness it is now contemplating projects on a grandiose scale.

The French would like to create a high-technology subbelt from Toulouse to Trieste, with the main emphasis naturally on the area to the west of the Italian border. There are plenty of plans on paper for this idea but little has so far occurred on the ground.

Belgium, too, has big plans to create not just a science park at Louvain, linked to the Catholic university, but also to develop the area into a small town.

Some 300 acres along the Brussels-Namur-Luxembourg autoroute have been set aside for development which is anticipated will expand the population to 50,000 by the year 2,000. By then there will be 15,000 students located there. The idea is to encourage the interface between university and industry: the park would include production facilities based on research concerns.

A start has been made on this project, with around 40 concerns in operation, employing 1,000 people. This is very large by comparison with British parks where only the longer-established Cambridge park could be compared with these numbers. But it must be questioned whether, at the moment, the area is little more than an industrial park, a development to utilise land.

Another venue to have made an encouraging start is West Berlin's Technical University. Faced by a lack of space for research facilities, the university took over a redundant fac-

tory and, over the last two years, has attracted at least 30 concerns in the areas of robotics, data processing and production technology.

The Berlin Centre for Innovation and New Enterprises is not unlike Warwick's Science Park in concept, offering office services, central administration available to all concerns and conference facilities.

Several other West German projects are at an advanced planning stage, most notably those at Wilhelmshaven, Stuttgart and the Fraunhofer Institut at Karlsruhe.

The movement now spreads from north to south—from Lund, where the University of Malmö is making good progress and at Gothenberg, where a site is being sought for a park—to Bari in the south of Italy and Valencia in Spain.

The Gothenburg park, sponsored by the Chalmers Innovation Center, has a history of spin-off companies on which to base its hopes. The university actively supported this spin-off by advising members of the academic staff who wanted to branch into industry, by running seminars and courses and by setting up an innovation building.

The specific intention of the Italians is to encourage technological entrepreneurship. The first park came into being with the Tecnopolis Novus Ortus in Valenzano, near Bari. Others are being established in Venice and Trieste but some hover on the borderline between science parks and innovation centres.

The fact that the first of the parks was set up in Bari was no coincidence: it was seen as part of the Government's aim of developing the Mezzogiorno. It might be fanciful to imagine

it will, as the Italians claim, "develop the area into the forefront of European information society," but at least the authorities at the Tecnopolis Novus Ortus realise that the creation of new concerns has to be undertaken gradually in an area that is largely populated by an unskilled peasant workforce.

In Holland, the University of Utrecht is planning to set up a science park, while Eindhoven would like to reduce its dependence on the giant Philips multinational. In Delft, the University of Technology is investigating ways of setting up an information-transfer scheme.

Meanwhile, in France the giant Sophia-Antipolis at Valbonne receives a lot of publicity for its grandiose plans, but technology transfer is not very prominent in them.

Mr Pierre Lafitte, president of the Association Sophia-Antipolis at the Ecole des Mines in Paris, claims there are already 5,000 workers on the site, although outside observers doubt whether many of these people are involved at the interface between technology and industry. It is undoubtedly true that the area has the highest concentration of high technology industry in the country.

Mr Lafitte has further forecast that some 1,200 acres will be set aside for the site and that, eventually, around 30,000 people will be working on it, which would put most science parks in the world into the shade, (outside a few in the US).

Elsewhere in France, work is going ahead on parks in Lyons and Nancy.

T.M.

Innovation centres

A marriage of private and public funds

INNOVATION CENTRES represent a different approach to the creation of new firms and new jobs, but one with which some science park-linked universities—among them Heriot-Watt, Aston, Liege and Brussels—are becoming associated.

The European Community has been anxious for some time to help promote high-technology-based concerns and it grasped the opportunity offered when the British-based Business in the Community suggested a way in which this might be achieved.

Mr Christopher Norman-Butler, head of Business in the Community, believes that conventional science parks are too property-orientated, despite being run by universities. The emphasis should be much more on the creation of innovative concerns in the small-to-medium size, he believes.

Consequently, the European Business and Innovation Centre Network (EBN) was created to set up areas which would act as forcing grounds for companies capitalised between £50,000 and £100,000, with a turnover of between £0.5m and £1m, and trading internationally, especially within Europe. Since the organisations came into being 18 months ago three have got off the ground in Britain, in Swansea, Newcastle and in Connah's Quay, north Wales; one in Belgium at Liège; two in France at Nancy and at Lannion in Brittany; and four in Germany—West Berlin, Hamburg, Saarbrücken and Dortmund.

The intention is that some 20 innovation centres a year should be created in each of the next three years.

The importance of these centres is that they are a marriage between public and private capital and since this arrangement is much more advanced, and a lot more acceptable in the UK than in the rest of the Community it is no surprise that more progress has been made here.

Next year, for instance, centres should begin operating in both Runcorn and Barnsley. The former will be capitalised by ICI, British Nuclear Fuels, other local industrial concerns and businesses and by Cheshire County Council, and Warrington New Town. In Barnsley the local council and South Yorkshire County Council will be joined by British Steel (In-

dustry), National Coal Board (Enterprise) and the National Westminster Bank.

Others are pencilled in for Cardiff, Plymouth (using surplus dockyard buildings), Londonderry and at two locations in Scotland. In addition, ICI is pressing hard for one in Billingham.

In continental Europe it is expected that such centres will be set up in Valenzano, Genoa, Taranto and Bari in Italy; and Eindhoven, Enschede and Helmond in the Netherlands. In Ireland there are plans for centres in Cork and Limerick.

There are gaps in this local map. The Danes tend to look northwards to their Scandinavian partners in this field and there is no recognisable activity in Greece. Apart from the two mentioned, French schemes tend to be notable for their theoretical rather than their practical progress.

Intentions

The EBN is keen to pump money into these developments and has allocated finance from its Regional Development Fund. Using the EBN as the vehicle constraints its efficiency since any aid from it can only be given to nationally assisted areas. A place like London, for instance, does not qualify for financial help from Brussels, however urgent its need.

The amount of money made available by the fund is not inconsiderable. Liège received some £2.1m towards its centre and both Barnsley and Runcorn anticipate they will get considerable support for their ventures.

Outside the UK the greatest effort is being put into the idea by the Germans and Italians. In the case of Germany, links with the technical universities and industry have always been close, creating the right climate for this development.

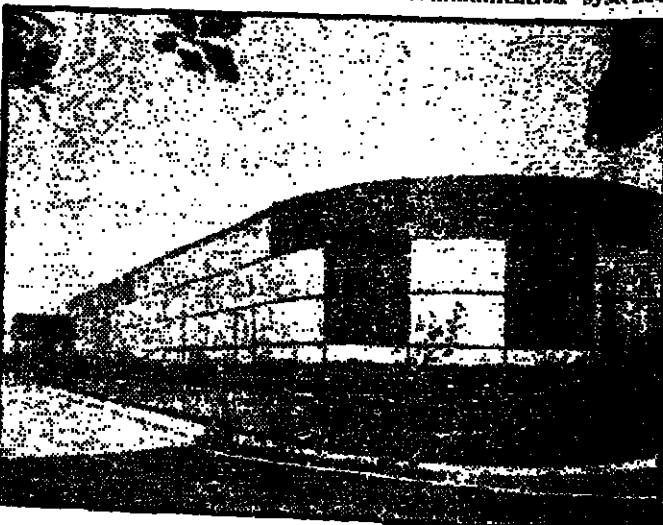
In Italy the push has been greatly assisted by the state-owned IRI which has allocated substantial funds for the build-up of innovation centres.

Mr Jan Dekker, a senior official in the Commission's regional policy directorate who is being seconded to EBN, emphasises that business innovation centres "are not just another way of subsidising industry. They are a way of creating jobs in small concerns and supporting innovative technology. Both are keystones for the future."

TONY MORETON



An artist's impression, above, of a section of Wavertree Technology Park, Liverpool. Seen below is the Plessey Crypto headquarters at Wavertree, where 300 people are employed on the manufacture of communication systems.



New facilities...

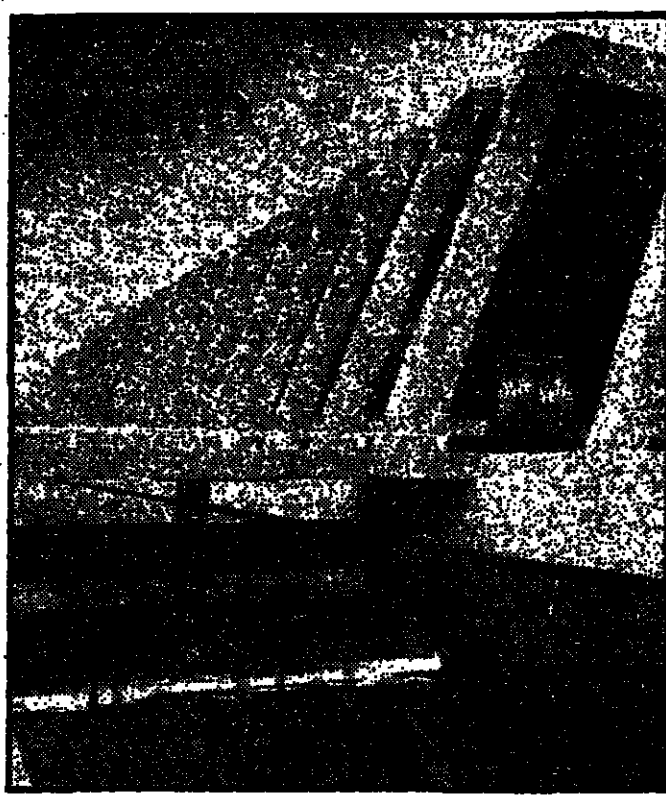
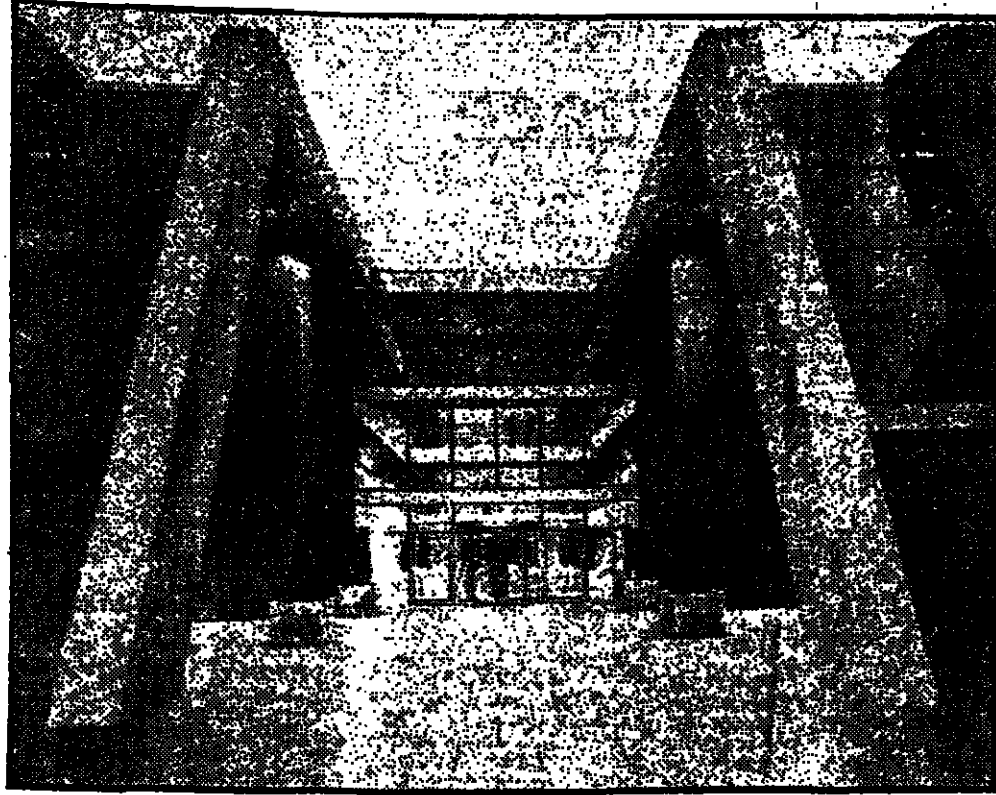
The Cefn Llan Science Park, Aberystwyth has facilities for links with The University of Wales mainframe.

...in Mid Wales

Ring Mid Wales Development - FREEPHONE NEW WALES

Efforts to establish science parks in Britain's two oldest university cities have met with very different results, as RHYS DAVID reports here.

Pictured right: the entrance to Napp Laboratories futuristic complex at Cambridge Science Park. The £20m centre houses the pharmaceutical company's research, production and distribution facilities. Napp is a pioneer company in the field of release-controlled drugs for the treatment of such conditions as heart disease, asthma, arthritis and cancer pain. Also pictured another view of the Napp complex



Cambridge

Setting the pace for UK projects

IN THE past few weeks another landmark has been passed by the Cambridge Science Park. The number of companies on the 50-hectare site, the inspiration and model for similar schemes up and down the UK, is now more than 50 and the total number of people employed already exceeds 1,500.

For Cambridge's many imitators the question is whether this success is reproducible, or whether the Cambridge phenomenon is peculiarly to do with the outstanding reputation of the university, coupled with the acknowledged shrewdness with which the development has been managed by its sponsor, Trinity College, and in particular its bursar, Dr John Bradfield.

The companies that have moved to the site offer perhaps the best evidence. In the case of Napp Laboratories, which occupies a striking glass and concrete high-tech building academic excellence was clearly a factor, and contacts made by the company—by far the biggest on the site with total employment of more than 300—have already proved "exciting and informative" in the words of its research director, Dr Stewart Leslie.

Advantages

Various academics are helping the company on a consultancy basis, on concepts it was already exploring. The next phase, Napp hopes, will be for academics to begin bringing in ideas of their own. Since coming to Cambridge, Napp—a pioneer in the field of controlled-release drugs for the treatment of conditions such as asthma, heart disease, arthritis and cancer pain—has moved into a new field, biological sciences, where it hopes to make significant advances in the field of contraception and fertility. International groups in fact now account for roughly a quarter of the companies on the park. Apart from Napp, there is IPRV, a total of four subsidiaries of the Dutch Akzo group; Mobira, the Finnish mobile communications company; and LKB Biochrom of

Sweden, all of which see advantages in developing links with university departments.

For other companies the level of high-tech activity already going on in Cambridge, both inside and outside the science park—its result of a relatively permissive attitude within Cambridge over recent years towards the movement of academics between university and industry—has been important.

Attek, for example, is a small company which acts as a consultancy developing applications for robots in industry and has found in Cambridge the opportunity to co-operate with software houses, consulting groups, raw materials and CAD-CAM specialists, according to its managing director, Michael Skidmore. One of the diversified companies within the Aer Lingus group, it chose Cambridge after first examining a number of Thames Valley sites.

Other companies on the park represent spin-outs from the university itself. Cambridge Robotics, for example, is a consultancy run by Dr Bill Bolton, a former technical director of SKF in the UK, turned manufacturing engineering don, turned entrepreneur.

Among the tasks that Cambridge Robotics has undertaken have been design work for another company on the park, Datapac, which makes a black box for monitoring the performance of production lines operating under critical time/temperature relationships.

Datapac's product originated in the US at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and was brought to the UK by the company's managing director, John Bates. He chose Cambridge for another reason, which has become important in its success: it was seen as an agreeable place in which to live as well as to make contacts.

The catalyst helping to create the environment in which connections of this sort can be



Delegates from Hong Kong and Chinese pharmaceutical companies visit Napp Laboratories at Cambridge

made has been Trinity, which exercises a largely unseen, but nevertheless powerful influence over the park.

"The college's own links with science and industry across the university have enabled it to provide an introduction into the university system," comments Mrs. Lindy Beveridge, who acts as a college spokesman for the park.

The college has used income generated from the park to establish a launching fund to support joint research between university departments and companies. Under the scheme a programme is agreed by the two sides and a researcher is taken on to the company's payroll. He or she is then expected to divide his time between the university and the company, with benefits from his work accruing to both parties.

Among the companies to take advantage of the scheme have been LKB Biochrom, which is co-operating with the Department of Physical Chemistry on a project directed by Dr Mary Archer, and Agricultural Genetics, which has received funds for enzyme research at the university's biotechnology centre.

Trinity's own presence on the park is deliberately low-key with administration carried out for it by Bidwells, a Cambridge firm of chartered surveyors. There is no central administrative unit but instead there are common facilities in the form of a bar and small meeting rooms where individuals from different companies can mix. This month has also seen the opening of a new innovation centre providing 20 small units of accommodation for starter companies, and common facilities.

Very importantly, too, for incoming companies, the college, through Bidwells, has taken over the burden of securing planning approval. Applications are jointly vetted to make sure they conform to the types of activity considered appropriate—in general, a large research element—and are forwarded to the planning authorities.

All land is leasehold and companies can choose between a

short lease of three years or have buildings put up to their own requirements on a 25-year lease. Ground leases, extending to 125 years, are also available.

The science park, as Segal Quince and Partners, a Cambridge firm of consultants points out, is in fact only a part of the Cambridge phenomenon—altogether there are more than 300 high-tech companies in and around the city and many of these were established before the Trinity venture got off the ground. A further 30-40 are being added each year.

The park, however, has, according to Segal Quince's Nick Segal, become a visible symbol to the outside world that high technology industry is flourishing in Cambridge and has given status and confidence to the sector in the area.

Other factors are now also coming into play to sustain the momentum which has developed. The growth of high

technology industry has, for example, produced a growing network of technicians available to help start up businesses, though there are some signs of labour shortages and these could prove a limiting factor on future growth.

Local sources of venture capital, such as Cambridge Venture Capital, have also begun to spring up to provide financial backing for new ideas, supplementing the work done by the banks and, in particular, Barclays, one of the main backers of the earliest science park schemes. Merchant bankers, Singer and Friedlander, has also set up in the city, and 51 is also active in support of new ventures, along with other venture capital funds, such as Advent.

With the development of road links, such as the M25 and M11, and with Stansted about to be developed as London's third airport, the area's communications with the rest of the world are also set to improve dramatically.

The weight of evidence would seem to suggest that many of these circumstances will not readily be found in the UK outside Cambridge and that success on a similar scale is likely only in one or two other centres.

Cambridge's success, however, may have reached the point where it is self-sustaining. Other colleges are proposing their own science parks, with St John's set to develop a site opposite the Trinity park.

Trinity itself has virtually exhausted the land available to it on the present science park site. It has other land in East Anglia, including sites near to Felixstowe docks which is intended for industrial development. With other towns in the region such as Thetford and Bury St Edmunds interested in attracting spin off from Cambridge, there is talk of a possible high tech corridor developing in the region.

Oxford

Still hopeful

FROM THE list of university cities and towns with linked science parks, one name has hitherto been conspicuously absent.

In Oxford a number of schemes have been put forward and there is a commercial development called itself Oxford Science Park several miles away at Abingdon. One of the most promising projects drawn up for the city area itself, however, has been bogged down for three-and-a-half years in a fruitless wrangle with the British Rail Property Board.

From an original list of eight sites, Science Parks Limited (SPL), run from Oxford by Noel Hodson, a consultant in new ventures and technology transfer chose 11 acres of land owned by BR around Oxford Station, as its preferred location. Since then, the site has been on the market for 28 years, with strong claims to be Oxford's best-known eyesore.

More importantly it is one of the last available sites within the city within cycling distance of the university's laboratories and colleges.

SPL's bid to develop the site was rejected two years ago in favour of a proposal by Beacon-tree Estates for a supermarket and housing. With no scheme of this nature getting under way, however, partly because of planning objections, BR's Property Board has recently terminated its agreement with Beacontree, opening the way for new schemes to be considered again.

It is this point that SPL had been hoping — and indeed still hopes in spite of lack of

setbacks — to re-enter the fray. There is general support, Hodson points out, from both the city and the university for a science park that could, in broad terms, be described as on-campus, or, at any rate, not too far off-campus, and his own scheme has backing from Trafalgar House, 31, Barclays Pension Trust, and Stanford University, operators of one of the most successful US parks.

They have all been attracted by what is, by British standards, a relatively unconventional centre, termed by Hodson "a research science park."

The aim would be not so much to attract manufacturing companies anxious to capitalise on proximity to the university, even where these companies were proposing to carry out significant research activities. These would be more suitably housed, it is felt, in the various other parks which up to 30 other developers are proposing elsewhere in the Oxford area. Among these are BL which has been seeking permission to develop its SU-Bute site in North Oxford.

Instead, the SPL centre would provide a half-way-house between the academic and industrial world where the university's scientific establishment would find the right environment for commercialising scientific projects. It would also act as a marketplace, according to Hodson, where potential backers from all over the world could come and be shown a variety of products and projects being developed by different tenants.

Many projects which currently go abroad because of lack of

interest in the UK could be saved, Hodson argues. Fields where there could be important spin-offs from Oxford laboratories, he believes, are biochemistry, materials sciences, and health care.

The park would be run by a management company, sustained out of rent income, employing 11 people. Apart from a director, whose job would include marketing the services of the centre and the project going on within it, the staff would also have professionals such as accountants and a patent lawyer to handle problems in these fields on behalf of tenants.

Activities would be housed in a total of 370,000 sq ft of flexible laboratory and office and common space built as a series of collegiate courtyards, entered through a main gatehouse from the station square.

SPL's initial bid was a figure of £3.5m for the freehold plus a contribution of £1m towards rebuilding the station and provision of a 500-space car park for BR, concealed in a multi-storey building. This would lead on to an arcade of shops following the route through to the city centre, the architects, Sidell, Gibson Partnership envisage. In addition, a cycleway would be provided through the scheme to the nearby riverside. The gross development value of the scheme, including some housing on the riverside, is put at £4.8m, a figure which, according to Hodson, could be raised relatively easily for a scheme associated with Oxford.

Continued on next page

KfW – Broad strength in specialized financings

— 1984 balance sheet total DM 78.5 billion. —

Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, one of the ten largest banks in West Germany, is a unique financial institution: A development bank for both the national economy and the economies of the developing countries. Its activities are focused on providing finance for capital investment in German industry, furthering the exports of German capital goods, and channeling German government assistance to developing countries.

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Key figures from the balance sheet — in billion DM —	
Cash reserves and balances with banks	1.4
Loans granted	65.7
Loans on a trust basis	7.4
Liabilities in respect of banking operations	60.1
Bonds	5.1
Capital and reserves	3.1

Innovation projects are eligible for financing under KfW's program for small and medium-sized companies also if a company cannot provide adequate security. As a compensation for the higher risk the borrower is required to pay a risk premium of 2 percent (bringing the interest rate, which is fixed for the entire term, to 8.5 percent per annum at present).

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North East of England

Concept takes root

EAST of the Pennines the concept of the science park is taking root and growing after a hesitant start.

Those linked directly to the Universities of Bradford, Leeds and Hull are now well established and the Mountjoy Research Centre on Durham University's science campus was formally opened in September. Sheffield is planning a technology park. York is considering a more formal science park development, and an innovation centre is now on the cards for Newcastle. The Cadcam Centre in Middlesbrough, which is not linked to a university, has been running for a year.

The Listerhills Centre, a mile from Bradford's commercial heart, is viewed by the developer, English Estates, as the most successful of its type in the UK outside Cambridge.

With 18 companies from one-man outfits to business information techniques whose workforce is about 50, Listerhills has a somewhat different role from the other three university-associated science parks.

While all of them are geared to providing facilities for academics ready to spin off into the commercial sector, while assisting each city's employment base to broaden, Listerhills has the added task of bequeathing to Bradford a sharper, more modern and less dull image.

Its single storey, smoked-glass units next to the technologically-oriented university stand next to some of the West Yorkshire city's most derelict urban districts.

After a slow start letting the 42,000 sq ft first phase opened in April 1983, the units went so quickly that English Estates could not build the 28,000 sq ft second phase fast enough.

More than 80 per cent of the second phase is now reserved or under offer and the English Estates board has approved a further 10,000 sq ft of building.

It foresees the development of another six acres in three to five years, raising the development's total area to 11.75 acres. Listerhills management estimates that there are 250 people working at the science park. Nine out of 10 people who were involved in the initial formation of the companies using Listerhills lived and still live in the Bradford commuting area.

With strengths in engineering, electronics and computers, it is perhaps surprising that the



Units at the Listerhills Centre, above, were let so fast that English Estates could not build them fast enough to meet the demand.

University has not created more business at Listerhills. One of them is Bradford University Software Systems (Buss), run by Mr David Buland, former Bradford University academic.

The presence of high-tech companies in Bradford and Leeds, such as Systime and Microtec, have been a help in the development of Buss's computer graphics.

Design work

Springfield House in Leeds is a much smaller development in a two-storey building on 1.55 acres. Eleven companies operate from Springfield, which is directly integrated with the university and benefits from a fibre optic link from the university's mainframe computer.

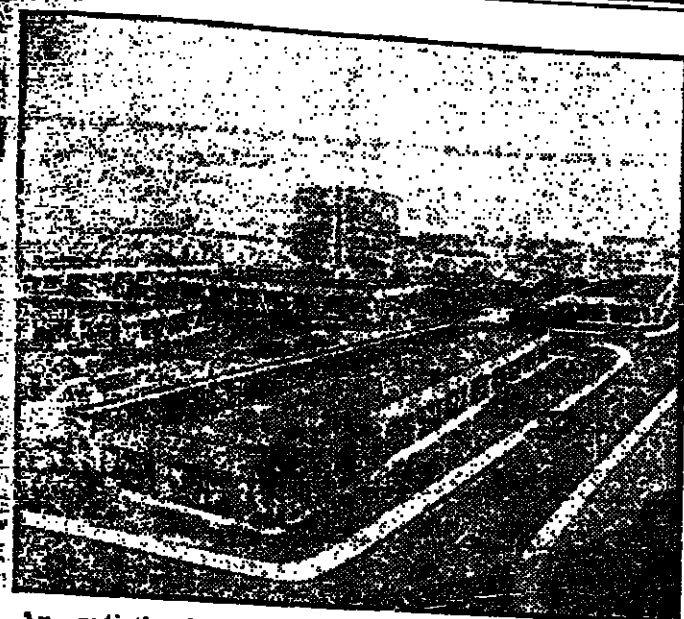
One of the companies is SR Drives, which carries out electrical design work and has developed an electric motor with a stainless steel core. Rents in Leeds which run from £4.50 a sq ft are higher than in Bradford where the lowest rate is £3.65.

The Newlands Centre at Hull was finished only in November last year but is already demonstrating a closer link between academics and business than was initially shown by Bradford. Most of the seven companies there were spawned out of university contacts. One of them, Metaforth, has produced what is claimed to be the world's fastest data-processing machinery.

NICK GARNETT



At the Mountjoy Centre, Durham, (above), near the University's science campus, the Mountjoy project is assisted by Prof Fred Holliday, Vice Chancellor (left), and Mr Tony Pender, chief executive of the developers, English Estates; with them is Dr Eric Howells, director of the university's new Industrial Research Laboratories, the centre's first tenant



An artist's impression of the Listerhills Centre, located a mile from Bradford's commercial heart

Brunel

Go-it-alone park well-placed for expansion

BRUNEL is a "third wave" park, linked to one of the newest and smallest of British universities.

If points were awarded to science parks on the basis of their location, then Brunel would score highly. It stands on the western edge of London, within minutes of three motorways—the M4, M25 and M40—and within three miles of Heathrow airport. It also stands, near the centre of Uxbridge, in a part of outer London that is booming. Property developments have been going up fast.

Bewlett Packard, for example, the first name that comes to everyone's lips when science parks are mentioned, has taken an eight storey building in the town and is contributing to projects at the university.

Full control

Brunel is going-it-alone with the development of its science park, of which phase one should be open by next April. It originally approached a major institution and the Greater London Council for help with the funding, but decided to undertake the development itself to keep full control over the project.

It borrowed £1m to undertake the necessary infrastructure and work on the first building began last spring. Four units comprising a total of more than 4,000 sq ft are going up of which letters-of-intent have already been received from three potential tenants—Air Products, the 600 Group and Campus Computers, a small concern that is engaged in computer work for the disabled.

If these three pursue their interest, a third of the space in the building will have been let even before marketing has been seriously launched. Mr Peter Russell, director of the park, is convinced other tenants will soon arrive.

"With our superb location, flexible design and links with the university it is inconceivable that Brunel could do anything but succeed," he claims, making it sound the

most obvious statement imaginable.

Brunel's one problem might be the level of rents it has to charge tenants. These range between £10 and £12 a sq ft, a level that would cause many northern science park administrators to choke on their breakfast cornflakes.

Such rents could inhibit the small concerns and start-up operations that are essential to any science park, but Mr Russell hopes to overcome this by offering such groups university accommodation when it is available.

"The university has allowed me to offer small spaces on the campus for start-up concerns if they find the rents too high — and once these have proved themselves they can then move into the park."

Similarly, he has forged links with the nearby commercial enterprise, Stockley Park, alongside London airport, so that concerns on the science park which expand to the point where they have outgrown their natural premises can then move to a larger environment where they might, for instance, enlarge their manufacturing operations.

Initiative

Within the first phase of the development Brunel is also accommodating a new international headquarters for the International Tin Research Institute, which is taking 21 acres for a building that should be ready next April.

An administrative block for an international organisation could hardly be justified with science park membership, but the Tin Institute will also have its R and D headquarters in the building. Mr Russell states that the initiative for the move actually came from this side of the operation. The link with the university is even closer for example, Professor Colin Bodsworth, dean of technology, is closely involved with the institute.

TONY MORETON

Greater Manchester

Need for larger developments

SURROUNDED BY newly-planted trees an L-shaped, two-storey, smoked-glass building rises from its foundations last year near the University of Manchester. "Not before time" many people could be heard saying.

The Manchester Science Park is a late attempt to use hi-tech developments underpinned by the city's higher educational institutions as a tool for a long-term shift in the area's employment base. It has been up and running for a little over a year and houses eight companies employing 90 people. The science park has progressed quicker than some proponents expected but it needs to expand even faster.

Mr Derek Burr, chief executive of the managing company, expects its 24,000 sq ft to be full by next spring and has sought approval for the construction of a second building. The financing of such a second phase has

proved troublesome, though private developers and an urban development grant might come up trumps. Some industrialists in Manchester would prefer to see greater locally-based financial commitment to the science park's growth on the lines of the park based on Aston University, Birmingham.

The science park, the only one of its type in the conurbation, is a partnership of Manchester City Council, the University and four private companies.

The city, with the aid of the Department of Environment's inner city programme money provided the land and buildings, taking out a 35 per cent stake in the management company. The University paid for its 35 per cent shareholding. The balance of 30 per cent was split between Ferranti, Ciba-Geigy, Fothergill, and Harvey and Granada. Some £1.25m has been put into the science park.

excluding land. University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology has an option to buy part of the University's share.

Science Park Limited has a board of 12, some £200,000 of working capital (likely to be increased shortly) and a 125-year lease on its Enterprise House and the 16 acres of land included in the deal.

The science park's original concept was that the first phase would offer start up accommodation for small companies and later phases would provide building plots for larger ones. Mr Burr has helped persuade the board to accept that later phases should be organised in the same way as the first, though perhaps offering units larger than the range of 460 to 2,000 sq ft.

Strong belief

Everyone recognises the impact of the science park will be limited even in the medium term but Mr Burr is a great believer in the concept. "The aim is to transform the industrial base of the conurbation with something new," he says. "It can only be long term because we are talking about small companies with high technology."

The park's eight companies, with a ninth due shortly taking the occupied space to 13,000 sq ft, are linked by internal telephone to the University, UMIST and the business school.

Company personnel can use the refectories and sports facilities. The type of company allowed into the park has been strictly controlled but the park's initiatives have still been surprised by the slow take-up by companies not spawned by academics across the road.

Of the eight, five are outgrowths from the higher educational institutions. One of them, Visual Machines, employing 30, is one-third owned by the university with other share owners including Rediffusion and two robotics companies. Visual Machines manufactures vision systems for industrial inspection.

Another, CURD, does not fit into the normally accepted hi-tech mould. It is a university project, not a company, and utilises a database of people and facilities which could help small businesses in research and development. This is a non-profit-making business financially supported by the NatWest Bank.

The three "external" businesses are: a software company, an information service for non-impact printing and a design consultancy which uses rather than offers high technology. A company that looks set to move into the science park shortly has developed computerised phototypesetting equipment.

But Greater Manchester needs a much bigger science park development, not least to help improve the conurbation's image.

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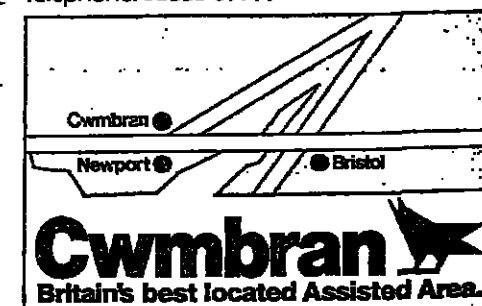
Llantarnam Park is on the southern edge of Cwmbran New Town. It's only a few minutes by direct express-way to the M4. Under two hours from London by High Speed trains from nearby Newport.

If you're looking for the ultimate in High-Tech accommodation, there's Raglan House at only £3.50 a sq. ft. With a similar campus style building due for completion in early 1986.

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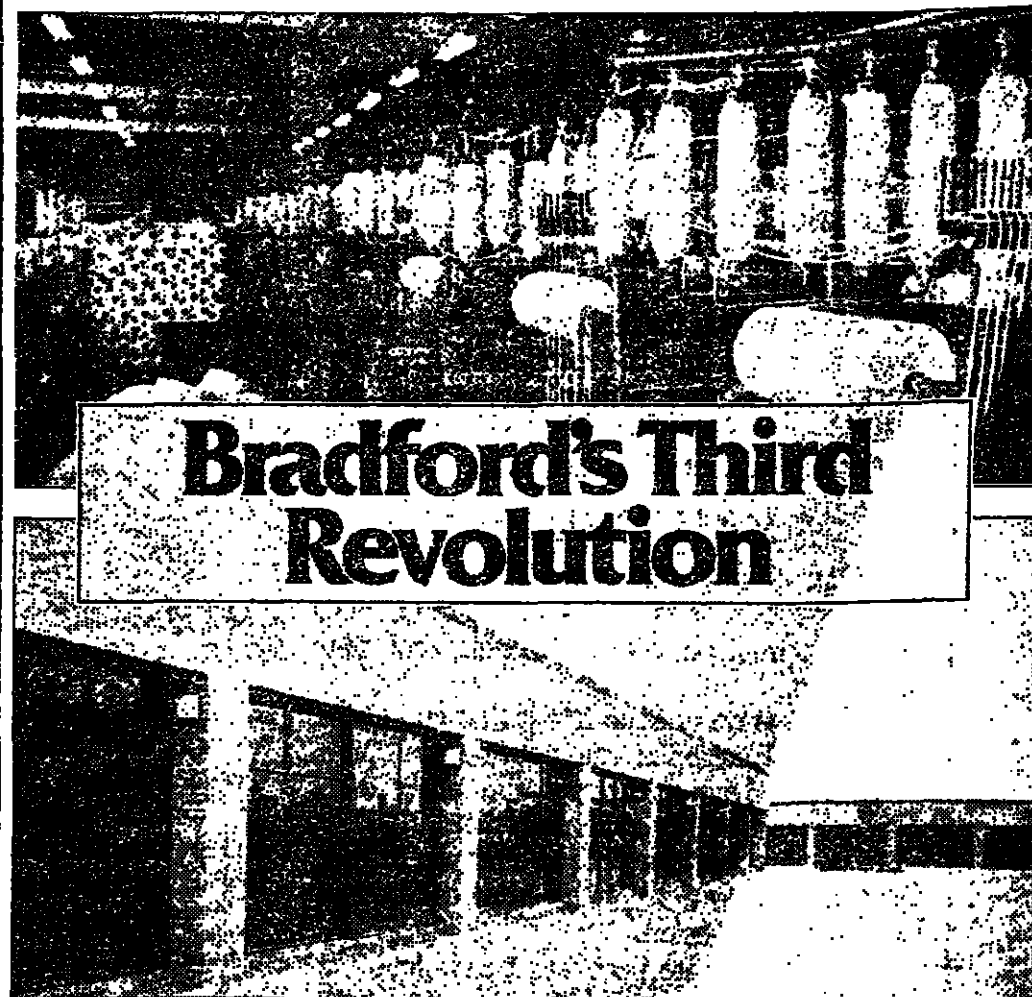
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For full details contact:- The Commercial Manager, Cwmbran Development Corporation, Gwent House, Cwmbran, Gwent NP44 1XZ Telephone: 06333 67777



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So it was no accident that English Industrial Estates decided to develop their first Science Park in the heart

of the city, right next door to Bradford University with its newly established Micro-Electronics Centre. Phase 1 of the Science Park development is now over subscribed and Phase 2 is progressing at a pace.

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For details of investment opportunities, the Science Park or the Research and Development grants available, contact:

Jan Page, Room 5, Bradford Economic Development Unit, City Hall, Bridge Street, Bradford BD1 1HY. Telephone 0274 753780.

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Investee companies are expected to locate on Aston Science Park where BTL offer the services of an in-house management team able to draw upon wide industrial and financial experience to provide help in key areas of management which a rapidly growing company may not yet possess. The addition of extremely flexible leases and accommodation, and the full technological support of Aston University make for a unique concept.

Contact:

Barbara Richards

Birmingham Technology Ltd, Love Lane, Aston Triangle, Birmingham B7 4BJ. Tel: (021) 359 0981. Telex: 334535.

The main British science parks

SUMMARY COMPILED BY TONY MORETON AND LORNE BARLING

University	Name	Contact	Partners with University	Open	Area (Acres)	Buildings completed (sq ft)	Buildings under construction (sq ft)	No. on park	University	Name	Contact	Partners with University	Open	Area (Acres)	Buildings completed (sq ft)	Buildings under construction (sq ft)	No. on park
ABERYST-WYTH	Cefn Llan Science & Technology Park	Russell Jones 0970 3111	Mid Wales Development	Feb 1985	6	8,000	4,000	1	KENT	Kent Research & Development Centre	Bernard Watts 0227 66822	Merseyside C.C.	Feb 1986	10	—	12,000	2
ASTON	Aston Science Park	Harry Nicholls 021 359 0981	City of Birmingham Lloyds Bank	1983	122	115,000	27,500	26	LIVERPOOL	Merseyside Innovation Centre	Arthur Rimmer 051 7080123	Liverpool Poly	1982	2	15,000	—	10
BATH	White Horse Business Tech. Park	G. Garland R. Pugh 02214 63111	West Wilts. D.C.	April 1986	50	—	14,000	3	LOUGH-BOROUGH	Loughborough Technology Centre	Roger Say 0533 87131	Leics. C.C.	April 1984	3	22,000	—	14
BIRMINGHAM	Inst. of Research and Development	Prof. John Samuels 021 472 1301	City of Birmingham Midland Bank	Mar 1986	12	17,000	12,000	7	LONDON	South Bank Technopark	Jeff Jeffers 01 923 2940	Prudential	April 1985	2.4	75,000	28,000	19
BRADFORD	Listerhills	Lawrence West 0274 733466 Phil Wilbourn 0302 66865	English Estates Bradford City	Mar 1983 (Phase I) Aug 1985 (Phase II)	11.75	22,700	—	18	LEEDS	Springfield House	Phil Wilbourn 0302 66865	English Estates	June 1983	1.96	32,200	—	10
CAMBRIDGE	Cambridge Science Park	John Tweddle 0223 841841	Trinity College	1972	130	450,000	90,000	55	MAN-CHESTER	Manchester Science Park	Dr Derek Burr 061 2261000	Manchester City Ciba Geigy, Ferranti, Fothergill and Harvey, Granada Television	Dec 1984	15.5	24,000	—	9
DURHAM	Mountjoy Research Centre	John Holden 0385 44173 David Rhodes 0642 765911	English Estates Durham C.C.	Oct 1985	2.7	39,800	—	1	NOTTING-HAM	Highfields Science Park	John Webb 0602 506101	Nottingham City	Dec 1984	14.0	31,000	24,000	14
EAST ANGLIA	Univ. of East Anglia Science Park	Philip Lannigan 0603 56161	—	Feb 1984	12	10,000	—	4	ST. ANDREWS	St. Andrews Technology Centre	Marian Sherwood 0592 205171	SDA	Dec 1984	0.74	12,000	—	3
GLASGOW/STRATH-CLYDE	West of Scotland Science Park	Alasdair McNicholl 041 946 7176	Scottish Development Agency	Sept 1983	72	45,000	—	11	SOUTH-AMPTON	Chilworth Research Centre	John Stuart-Buttie 0703 767420	Southampton City	1984	26	8,000	46,000	10
HERIOT-WATT (Edinburgh)	Heriot-Watt Research Park	I. G. Dalton 031 449 5111	—	1972	56	240,000	30,000	18	STIRLING	Stirling University Innovation Park	Robert Shanks 041 248 2700	SDA; Central Regional Council	Mar 1986	14	—	14,000	—
HULL	Newlands Centre	Phil Wilbourn 0302 66865 Richard Lister 0482 46311	English Estates Hull City	Dec 1984	3.0	25,800	—	9	SURREY	Surrey Research Park	Dr Malcolm Parry 0483 579693	—	1984	70	70,000	120,000	7
KEELE	Keele University Science Park	Dr David Cohen 0782 621111	Newcastle under Lyme Council Staffs C.C.	Dec 1986	15	—	23,000	—	SUSSEX	Sussex Univ. Science Park	John Golds 0273 606755	—	Sept 1985	Undefined	4,500	11,500	5
									SWANSEA	Swansea Innovation Centre	Nigel Carnie 0192 556715	Welsh Dev. Agency	Feb 1986	3.4	—	22,400	—
									WARWICK	Univ. of Warwick Science Park	David Rowe 0203 418535	Coventry City; West Midlands C.C.; Warwickshire C.C.	Feb 1984	24	70,000	45,000	27

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● At Highfields Science Park, Nottingham (above), electronic medical equipment is checked at Warwick Instruments' unit. Below: discussions on computer software development and consultancy projects at BYG Systems unit, also at Highfields.



● At Heriot-Watt Research Park, Edinburgh, Dr John Colles of the Medical Laser Unit, carries out research with a gynaecological laser system. Heriot-Watt Research Park is run by Mr Ian Dalton, who is also chairman of the UK Science Park Association.

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TRAVEL • MOTORING

France's thriving cottage industry

FOR TWO nations whose inhabitants so often proclaim a mutual animosity, the British and French spend a remarkable amount of time visiting each other. Come the first hint of summer, we leap into our cars and head for the Gallic countryside. There must be times when the residents of Sarlat or St Briac feel like the natives in Harrods on a July afternoon — are we really at home?

Well, the first hint of summer might be some way off, but the first hints of winter (if you can call snow and sub-freezing temperatures hints), have produced the preamble to those sultry days in bucolic settings. The brochures are starting to arrive.

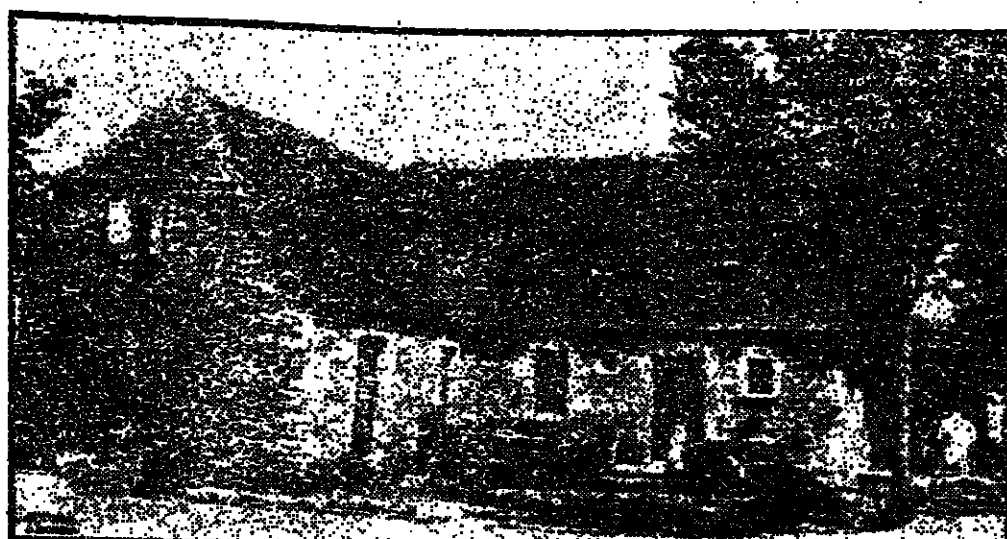
One of the first discoveries to be made on reading them is that the price war applies largely to the sordid realm of package tourism to the Mediterranean basin. In a world ruled by supply and demand, self-catering accommodation is very much in demand at the moment and the price of high quality accommodation is creeping up.

The British are enthusiastic self-caterers at all levels from tents to castles; more so, apparently, than other nations. The result is that something of an auction is taking place in the more popular destinations for UK villa rental companies such as the Dordogne, Brittany, the Algarve and Tuscany.

It also is apparent that while hotel package tour companies are accused of cutting corners, the villa and gite operators are finding their customers wanting to trade up. It is the more extensive villas, particularly those with pools, that go first, and a rising proportion of holidaymakers is happy to pay a premium for larger accommodation although filling it with fewer people.

There is fierce competition among agencies for good rental accommodation. But why book through an agent at all? Well, I suppose that with age comes that boring reluctance to learn too often in the dark. I reckon that the little extra I pay an agency for cottage/villa/gite rental is my insurance premium. You can get good inexpensive gites from the small advertisement columns of the newspapers, but it is very much a hit and miss affair. I have had my hits and misses over the years.

If you do book direct in this way, you are much better advised to act on word-of-mouth recommendation or, at very least, insist on getting the names and addresses of people who used the property last year so you can check up.



It is the atmosphere and the real thing you are paying for

There are lots of genuine reasons for a property not being on an agency's books — among them an unwillingness to be tied to a whole season let or to give outsiders the hefty commission they ask; a nervousness about not being able to check personally on the clients; and a reluctance to have too many taxable receipts committed to paper.

But some of the reasons are less understandable. Notable among these is the inability, or unwillingness, to meet the basic standards upon which many agencies insist these days. However, as any gite renter knows, these standards can vary hugely even in the best run operations. All that you can really insist upon is cleanliness, good bedding, good plumbing and an acceptable kitchen. After all, what you are paying for is atmosphere and a real country cottage.

In northern France, and particularly Brittany, however, you do tend to get a perception of purpose-built rural retreats with standards that to some extent prices) somewhat higher. But, for some tastes, what you gain in efficiency you lose in charm.

Prices are as long as a piece of string, too. The latest Gites de France book, produced by the government-sponsored Marketing Co-operative, has properties from less than £50 a week to more than £500. In most parts of rural France, however, a reasonable guideline would be a little over £100 a person for a four-bed gite for two weeks (car ferry rates included) in peak season.

Expect to pay a little more for Brittany and the prettier parts of Provence, a little less in the Auvergne, the Midi-Pyrenees and the Ardèche.

So personalised is the French cottage business that, as yet, the major tour companies have found very little in it to attract them. The result is that most of the operators are small family concerns (yes, I know there are exceptions: the AA, via Argosy, is very involved in cottage rental) and all seem to breed tremendous brand loyalty. It is a brave observer of the rental scene — for example, who cares to differentiate between Vacances Franco-Britanniques (St Margarets Terrace, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire) or Vacances en Campagne (Bignor, Pulborough, West Sussex); for whenever I write about one, I get cross comments from supporters of the other.

Both these companies have moved to counter one of the thorny problems of this business, and that is assessing financial security. In these times, the most delightful of people go bust. In many travel fields, some form of bonding or insurance is a legal requirement but not in cottage rental. VFB is bonded voluntarily, however, and Vacances en Campagne cheerfully will supply details for you or your bank to pursue a reference on them. If your chosen agent seems irritated by such questions, go elsewhere.

You might also go elsewhere if an agent does not have someone in the office who has seen the property in which you are interested. I have seen cottages

with perilous staircases for the old or young; ponds that could be a trap for toddlers; and bathroom arrangements that required a degree of intimacy among the house inhabitants. A good agency should be able to offer guidance, although not guarantees, about such matters.

For next year, Vacances en Campagne is moving into the big league in many senses of the word. It has taken a selection of chateaux on to its books, although it hurriedly adds: "They are not always vast and could suit two or three families sharing a holiday." The weekly rental of a 13th-century chateau in Alsace, for example, with six bedrooms and four bathrooms, is between £345 and £870.

Even in this elevated league, I would suspect there still are one or two basic rules for visitors. Personally, I always take a few basic kitchen items, particularly a tin-opener (I have yet to find one in a gite that really works) and a knife-sharpener. Do not forget your torch, your soap and, above all, details of how to get to the place.

Further details: the French Government Tourist Office (178 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AL) will provide lists of companies and agencies involved in the French gite/cottage market. Agents will often try to switch you when your first choice is booked, so it is well worth getting more than one brochure. There is a membership fee of £5 to join Gites de France, the central booking system, which also is at 178 Piccadilly. Argosy Travel (part of the AA) offers many of these gites, is a bonded ABTA member, and does not require any membership payment. Brittany Ferries is particularly strong on Brittany cottages.

Arthur Sandles



Ford's Car of the Year Award-winning Granada. This is the 2.3 litre V6 engine Scorpio with permanent four-wheel drive

Under Granada's spell

THE CHAMPAGNE corks will be popping at Ford headquarters as the top men celebrate a most convincing win for the Scorpio — the model we call the Granada — in the 1986 Car of the Year Contest.

Scorpio has not only won Car of the Year by a wide margin from the runner-up, the Lancia Y10. It also won its class in Germany's Das Goldene Lenkrad (Golden Steering Wheel) competition, and a week or two ago was chosen Top Car by Britain's Guild of Motoring Writers.

The result will disappoint Daimler-Benz as much as it surprised me. I would have chosen the new mid-range W124 saloon Car of the Year. I had felt confident the jury would, too. But the 56 motoring journalists from 17 countries put it third behind Scorpio and Lancia's Y10. The Mercedes won its class before long.

But who drives to such limits in the real world? Not many Toyota Celica GT owners, you can be sure. They will find the move from rear to front-wheel drive for the new model has one enormous advantage — the extra luggage space it has made available.

The Celica GT's back window lifts on to a load space as generous as an executive saloon's even though there is a full-sized spare wheel and tyre under the floor. Driver and front passenger have ample room but the usefulness of the rear seat is limited by severe lack of headroom. It would be uninhabitable by adults but suitable for children.

In Das Goldene Lenkrad — so did the Scorpio — and it was not eligible for Top Car because it had not been on sale in Britain for long enough.

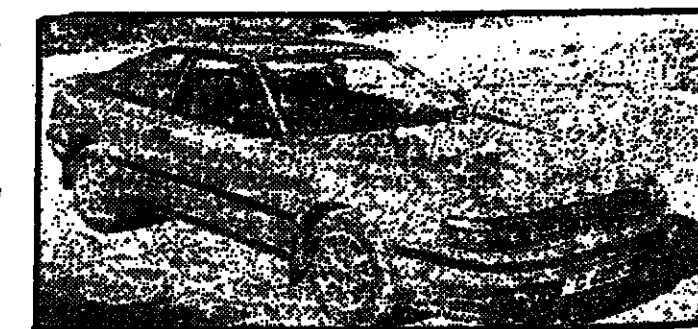
In Car of the Year, Scorpio scored just over 80 per cent of the total vote. It was the first choice of 20 of the jury, equal first or second for 26 more. Why did it do so well?

I think the fact that Ford has made anti-lock brakes a standard item of equipment throughout the Scorpio range weighed heavily with the jury. As largely, technical people, they understood its significance and were impressed. The general public may be less so and may not even understand its benefits. Many people think it has something to do with steering around tractors coming out of farm gates; which I suppose it is, if the road is slippery.

Another factor was the introduction of a 4x4 version of Scorpio. In combination, anti-lock brakes and an all-wheel drive option must have made up for the less than successful styling of Scorpio and the rather elderly V6 engines used so far on the top models.

Winning Car of the Year will be of enormous publicity value to Ford. Daimler-Benz can be expected to adopt a stiff upper lip over its disappointment for the good reason that there is a long waiting list for most W124 models. Cash flow means more than fanfares. That is Stuttgart's view.

Lancia will be pleased and possibly surprised that the Y10 ran the Scorpio close in Car of the Year. It is a good little car, well equipped and of individual appearance — but better than the W124 Mercedes? Surely not. Das Goldene Len-



Celica GT's potential in safety on hilly, winding roads. There were a lot of these in southern Spain where I tried it recently. At £12,000 for the manual, £12,679 for the four-speed automatic, the Celica GT is not in the bargain basement but the specification outshines that of many a costlier car. All the usual extras are standard.

For example, air conditioning, a tilt/slide powered sunroof, electric windows and electrically adjustable mirrors, central locking, remotely controlled

krad's jury put it no higher than fourth in its class.

In Car of the Year, the Honda 2-litre Accord was fourth, followed by the Saab 9000 and Renault Espace. Whereas Car of the Year is decided on a first past the post basis, and has only one winner, the Golden Steering Wheel is awarded in three classes: under 1.5 litres cylinder capacity, 1.5 to 2 litres, and over 2 litres. There were some strange bedfellows; how does one compare, say, a Renault Espace turbo-diesel with a Ferrari Testarossa? But the results were realistic, by which I suppose I really mean that I agree with them.

Among the small cars, the Mazda 323 beat the Seat Ibiza for first place; Toyota Starlet Turbo was third. Ford's 2-litre Scorpio won the middle class, with the Honda Accord second and Alfa 75 third. And in the over 2-litre class, the W124 was miles ahead of the Renault Espace, which just beat the Lancia Thema into third place.

The results in detail: Car of the Year — first, Ford Scorpio (337 points); second, Lancia Y10 (281); third, Mercedes W124 (273); fourth, Honda Accord 2-litre (198); fifth, Saab 9000 (104); sixth, Renault Espace (100).

Das Goldene Lenkrad — under 1.5 litres. First, Mazda 323 (1,298 points); second, Seat Ibiza 1.2 (1,231); third, Toyota Starlet Turbo (1,203).

Class II, 1.501 cc to 2-litres — first, Ford Scorpio (1,447 points); second, Honda Accord (1,278); third, Alfa 75 (1,158).

Class III — over 2-litres. First, Mercedes W124 (1,569 points); second, Renault Espace (1,287); third, Lancia Thema (1,284).

tailgate and fuel filler opening, an excellent four-speaker stereo/cassette and power aerial are all thrown in. So are power-assisted steering, handsome light alloy wheels and 60 series, V-rated Dunlop tyres.

That makes the price seem reasonable enough to tempt owners of Audi coupes, the Nissan Silvia and even the Mazda RX-7 into making a change.

Stuart Marshall

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IF THERE is a British club able to claim with some justice that its members have done "something rather than some-one," it is the Royal Society, that most exclusive organisation to which every scientist in the land aspires.

Admission to Fellowship—members speak of "election to the Royal Society"—almost always requires the recognition by your peers that you have contributed something truly original to science. Fellowship entails you to use the letters FRS after your name.

A few evenings ago, the Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher—herself a member—entertained other Fellows at No 10 Downing St. "There has never been such a collection of brains in this place," her husband, Denis, is reported to have said.

Royal Society of what? you might ask. Its full title is Royal Society of London for Improving Natural Knowledge, and it claims a longer continuous existence than any other national academy in the world. It was founded as a learned society in 1660 and granted its first royal charter by King Charles II in 1662. The cognoscenti call it simply "The Royal."

There are only 1,000 fellows of the Royal Society. Even to be considered for membership means that you must be recommended by two existing members—not on your initiative—must support an application which, even then, stands only one chance in 10 of being accepted in any given year.

Non-scientists are rare indeed among Fellows but they include royal princes and prime ministers who have won a second term of office, such as Sir Winston Churchill and Mrs Thatcher.

The Royal Society occupies an elegant white building in central London's Carlton House Terrace, close by the clubs of Pall Mall. As you enter you pass between busts of botanist Sir Joseph Banks, its longest-serving president (41 years), Isaac Newton, the second-longest (24 years), and the society's most illustrious son.

Banks, the founder of Kew Gardens, co-founder with Captain James Cook of Australia while on a Royal Society expedition, and friend of King Charles III (an enthusiastic patron), also founded its tradition of summer soirées with his weekly breakfasts for scientists at his home in Soho Square.

The Royal Society underwent a radical change after his death. For nearly 200 years it was a club of influential amateurs, calling for wealth or position as well as intelligence, but no scientific qualifications. In 1847, the statutes were revised to require six Fellows to support each application; then, formal election by the council.

The induction of new Fellows each spring has much of the ceremony of a royal investiture, with families present to watch the signing of the Charter Book, the society's greatest

The Royal Society, bastion of science, exclusive club, elects a new president today

Jolly good Fellows

treasure. It dates back to 1660 and the new Fellow's name rubs pages with kings, princes and such commoners as Christopher Wren, Edmund Halley, Clerk Maxwell, Kelvin and Rutherford.

"It is a memorable occasion. When you're first told, it's a great thrill," says Dr Cyril Hills, GEC's chief scientist. "And the ceremony is very moving—you're very conscious of the honour." Later, they ask you for £80 annual subscription; modest indeed for a club in St James's with a licensed restaurant, bedrooms, and a cachet that even Boodles or Whites must envy.

The staff run a business spending about £8m a year, of which two-thirds comes from government (as part of the £800m science budget) and the balance from the society, much of it through investments. At their head is the executive secretary, Dr Peter Warren, a geologist who came to the society in 1977 after a spell in the Cabinet Office, a short walk away. But the activities of staff and Fellows are differentiated sharply, even to the extent that no staff member—not even the executive secretary—can be elected to fellow.

The Fellows represent the entire spectrum of academic science, blurring at the boundaries into such areas as engineering and medicine. They are a corpus of demonstrably original thinkers whose motto, from Horace's Epistles, establishes their independence of mind.

"And do not ask, by chance, what leader I follow or what godhead guards me. I am not bound to reverse the word of any particular master."

As Britain's premier academy of science, the Royal Society speaks for British science at home and abroad.

Non-Fellows from all walks of science and technology are drawn into the myriad committees. Its activities overseas have forged formal bonds with the science communities of 46 countries.

The society does no research of its own in the laboratory sense. Once, the laboratories of the Royal Institution, a short walk away in Mayfair, were known as the "workhouse of the Royal Society," says Professor Sir George Porter, its director.

Nevertheless, the society has a lively involvement with research "in the field" of the traditional kind that once led to the discovery of Australia. Recent forays include the Geo-



Sir Andrew Huxley, the Royal Society's retiring president

traverse across Tibet. Another, more controversial kind of research involvement is its £5m programme investigating the causes of rising acidity of lakes and ground waters in Scandinavia.

The idea came from Lord Marshall, chairman of the Central Electricity Generating Board and a theoretical physicist, elected in 1971. In the mid-1970s, Marshall set a precedent when, as chief scientific adviser to the Department of Energy, he invited his club to criticise his newly-drafted energy and North Sea research programmes. No one in Whitehall ever had made such a request of the Royal before. "It was agreed on both sides that it was a very valuable exercise," says Sir Andrew Huxley, the society's retiring president.

Two years ago Marshall returned with another idea. As a scientist, he was quite unconvinced by the evidence on which those campaigning for tighter controls on coal burning were basing their case for curbing "acid rain." Would the Royal Society lend its authority and impartiality to the management of a new and more rigorous investigation? The cost would be met by the CEBG and the Coal Board.

Today, he will hand over to a new president, who will be elected by the council this afternoon — St Andrew's Day.

As well as picking a Nobel laureate, the tradition is to alternate between the physical and biological sciences; this time, it is the former's turn.

The president-nominate is Sir George Porter, a fellow for 25 years. Once, the council would try to keep the name a close secret until after election, but it always leaked out.

Sir George might well be described as the Terry Waite of British science. Where Sir Andrew is shy and uneasy in the role of public spokesman for science, unlike some other members of his famous family, he admits—Sir George is outgoing and an adroit diplomat, acceptable as referee by the most antagonistic combatants in any controversy involving science.

In the past, change has come but slowly to the Royal Society. For Stephen Cox, a newcomer to its senior staff, who has lately returned from the British Embassy in Washington, it epitomises Britain's national problems in striking the right balance between its history and traditions and finding a future. Under Sir George, change could be faster, though it takes time to do the careful preparations of recent years.

Sir George Porter is far too canny to commit himself on the future of the club before being elected formally as president. But there is one activity to which he is already deeply committed. This is the better public understanding of science—particularly among the professional classes.

This ignorance of science encourages anti-science campaigns on a vast canvas of topics from atomic energy to animal experiments, Sir George says. "Tell them there are atoms in everything and they go off and demonstrate."

He has just been made chairman of a tripartite committee of the Royal Society, the Royal Institution (where he will remain a research professor) and the British Association for the Advancement of Science (of which he is president this year). This is the first time these three bodies—all concerned deeply with the health and welfare of science—have come together. The aim is to implement the conclusions of a recent Royal Society investigation of the public understanding of science, which found that the British science community itself must work a lot harder to bring science and technology to the public.

One of his main targets will be the British scientist. He is unhappy with the antics and eccentricities of many of those entertainers paraded regularly, especially on TV, as "experts" but points out that the genuine article often remains too aloof and resistant to any public exposure. Ideally, he would like to see more David Attenboroughs speaking across the whole spectrum of the subject.

David Fishlock

Saleroom



A Redouté still: a missed opportunity by the Getty

Goal for Getty

NEXT WEEK the London auction houses move into top gear with both Sotheby's and Christie's holding their major winter sales of Impressionist and modern pictures, and Christie's offering prints from the Duke of Devonshire's collection at Chatsworth. Such a cornucopia of goodies is sure to attract the attention of the Getty, the eminence grise, or perhaps the eminence rose, of the art world.

The Getty Trust has \$100m to spend this year. Its main rival in purchasing power among the American museums, the National Gallery in London has a purchasing budget of £2.75m. Does the Getty, from its base at Malibu, California, represent a threat to Europe's art treasures? Are we in for a cultural rape which will make Duveen's efforts earlier this century look like mild scrimping?

The Aspen Institute in West Berlin this week held a seminar to debate the issue, with the chief executive of the Getty, Mr Harold Williams, answering critics from among Europe's museum bosses, including Sir David Wilson of the British Museum. Also in attendance were such interested parties as Tim Llewellyn of Sotheby's, representing the salerooms, and Julian Agnew, the dealers.

While Mr Williams managed to quieten many fears about the Getty's intentions, the arrival of a new type of collector, most forcefully represented in the Yuppie strand of youngish American millionaire, will have a more immediate impact. Because of its power—which

seems destined to grow even greater, at least in the size of its budget—the Getty is falling over backwards to defray criticism. Over half its expenditure goes on various educational, computerising, conserving, grant giving and other services in the cause of art history. Its main adverse effect could well be in concentrating all the resources for scholarship in art history on the Californian coast. In comparison its buying programme, with around \$50m this year, seems almost hesitant.

It has traditionally bought in three areas—Old Masters, antiquities, and 18th century French furniture—although it is extending into photography, and late 19th century pictures, and could well make a move into prints at the Chatsworth sale next week. But it seems to be keeping to its pledge not to compete if a national institution is after a major work of art; for example it held back from bidding for the Gospels of Henry the Lion in 1983. But this means little if prices are forced as high as they are by the Getty, which by Getty that a national museum has no chance of making a serious bid.

Its influence is also more pervasive away from the glare of the auction room. It only acquired seven of the 71 Chatsworth drawings in 1984 on the night (and was outbid when the prices it fixed for itself were topped by some private American buyers) but it has since bought more from dealers. It is mounting important photographic collections, and Old Masters, through private sales. It is using its power with caution but it is undoubtedly causing a flurry in some markets.

More cause for concern might be over things it has not bought. Why did it not buy the Redouté watercolours of illness, the originals prepared for the Empress Josephine. They went last week to a US dealer, cheaply, for \$5m, and are now to be split up and sold, at vast profit. The Getty could have kept together a masterpiece. It seems so nervous of overwhelming the market that it is absent when needed.

But the Getty is knowledgeable. This is not always the case among the new collectors, many of whom buy works of

art for purely financial reasons. One of the criticisms of investing in art is that you tie your money up, and it does not grow for you. This is no longer the case. Citibank has made loans of \$100m to owners of works of art, with their collections as security.

This is a strictly American phenomenon, just as the recent boom in the art market follows directly on the Wall Street boom and the strength of the American economy. We are witnessing the arrival of the collector as superstar following on from the artist as superstar. Indeed some collectors seem happy to play up to the part as Douglas Kramer, of example, the producer of Dynasty, often attends Sotheby's sales in New York accompanied by glamorous actresses from his soap opera. The new collectors are in it for fun—they might, alternatively, have invested in a baseball team—but they intend to use their money, borrowing against the value of their art, to finance other deals.

Jeffrey Deitch of Citibank reckons that there are 15 major new collections in America worth \$30m or more. The classic example is Norton Simon, but millionaires who have had a more precarious rise to wealth, such as Saul Steinberg, have caught the bug. These men are not without interest in their subject & they take the advice of professionals. Some are moving from the main area of buying—contemporary American art—into the Old Master market.

Of course the fact that Americans can enjoy big tax advantages if they give their works of art to museums is a factor behind the recent collecting spree in New York, but many of the new buyers want to create their own private museums rather than give to the Met in return for a tax gain.

It seems dangerous that the world market in works of art, estimated at \$30bn a year, should be so dependent on the American economy. A slump on Wall Street could badly hit confidence, just as, in the past year, the fall in oil prices has brought quietly back on to the market two "new" collectors—the Feds Old Masters, which did badly, and the Coral Orientalist pictures, which did well.

But perhaps the worst effect of the new buying is that it encourages ill-founded investment in art. Over the past decade only a few pieces have appreciated in value. At the middle and lower ends the art market is barely ticking over. As treasures disappear into museums the hunt is on for the super masterpieces; they command high prices. To secure one, rich collectors will move into new fields; for example the New York real estate millionaire, Ian Woodner's purchase of the Vassari page from Chatsworth for \$3.24m. He wanted to get his collection into a high sphere.

In a recent Sotheby's sale of Impressionists it was estimated that 40 of the people in the room were worth over \$100m. Many of these, or their representatives, will be in London next week. This picture could lead to some high prices—but in a very thin market. It only seems the disappearance of one big buyer to end a boom (this happened recently with Tiffany lamps). So, behind the headlines, the message remains: caveat emptor.

Antony Thorncroft



"There's no doubt about it—the game is exciting"

In deepest Sussex, City executives spend their weekends shooting each other. David McEwan reports.

They dye with their boots on

THE BUSINESS and financial world is often called a jungle where companies must expand or die, kill or be killed; where underperformers swiftly succumb to takeover predators and life is an endless struggle for the sustenance of profit.

Weekends are a chance for most to escape capitalism's natural laws and to indulge in something peaceful, such as gardening, a round of golf or washing the car.

But there are those who choose instead to swap pin-stripes for army camouflage clothing and, armed with paint-firing pistols, stalk each other through the Sussex countryside. All this activity is brought on by an adventure game called Skirmish run by a company called Figuretree Ltd in two privately-owned Sussex woods. Teams of up to forty players pay £17, including lunch, for a day of what many of them unashamedly call "cowboys and Indians for grown-ups." The main difference is that the grown-ups use pistols which fire real projectiles—small gelatin pellets filled with a bright orange dye—biodegradable.

Why should so many normal,

successful City men and women want to indulge in such an activity? I contacted company director Mr Kit Peters who invited me to find out.

Arriving at game headquarters in Holt Wood, near Oxford, early on a Sunday morning was like stepping into a battle zone. In a clearing stood a rough wooden cabin and a shelter while around an open fire nearby stood a dozen people in army uniform, talking and smoking. I was issued with similar equipment: camouflage jacket, protective goggles and mask, pistol and pellets.

When everyone was kitted out we learnt the rules of the game and how to load and fire the pistol. Then we were divided into teams. Accompanied by a brightly dressed referee we then walked deeper into the wood to our home base, marked by a red and white striped tape and a flag. Our aim was to protect the flag while trying to capture the other team's.

Using field radios the referees held a simultaneous countdown and we instantly took up pre-arranged positions. Some sheltered nearby to protect the flag while others melted into the undergrowth to find and attack the enemy base. There's no doubt about it—the game is exciting.

Walking through the bush for the first time was unnerving and I expected a shot from behind every tree. The protective mask made by breath sound unnaturally loud in my ears and I kept a tight but clumsy grip on my pistol. Suddenly I saw shadowy figures flitting through the trees and I drew closer to them to make sure it was the enemy. When I could see they were wearing red armbands (I was wearing yellow) I raised my pistol, hoping to fire a shot before they saw me.

But, unfortunately for me, they had seen me and soon I was dodging a hail of pellets. I started running, my only thought on how to get away, but I hadn't got far before a blow on my arm and a splash of orange meant I was officially dead.

The only thing left to do was walk back to game headquarters and wait for the next game. Despite the game's unmistakably militaristic overtones Mr Peters says people don't play it for role-playing or the "killing" but because it's fun. In fact he tries to put off the macho fantasists by encouraging women players, who usually make up about a third of teams, and he boasts a 90 per cent return rate amongst first time participants.

Figuretree has ambitious plans for expansion. Following interest from several firms with sales forces, they recently recruited a management consultant to develop the way the game stimulates leadership and organisational skills.

Overwhelming demand from people wanting to establish their own game has spurred the company into franchising after being in operation only 18 months. Three groups have already paid the £12,000 fee and another seven are interested.

Mr Peters said one of the attractions of taking a franchise was being supplied with the company's pistols which were specially developed with a manufacturer of tranquilliser guns. Figuretree has a patent and worldwide manufacturing rights on the pistols, which Mr Peters believes are more accurate and powerful than American weapons used by most rivals because they use compressed air instead of CO2 gas.

But why do so many City people play the game? Mr Mike Spivey, a stockbroker with investment bankers Merrill Lynch, regularly organises games of 40-50 colleagues. He thought the attraction of the game was the opportunity it gave desk-bound executives to run around with abandon. The nature of the game also appealed to their success-oriented lives and winning was important to them, he said.

Mr Richard Horton, investment manager with insurance brokers Reed Stenhouse, says he enjoys playing because the game is so different from any other activity. "I suppose I'm a bit of a child at heart. It's fun crawling around trying to shoot people." IBM fields groups of up to 80 people and organiser Mick Ellis says players include customer engineers, credit managers, finance advisers and even a chiropodist. He enjoys the game because it allows him to engage in a team activity without the pain or mess of games such as rugby.

Mr Hans Jorgensen, a director of DRG, the Bristol-based packaging and stationery group, decided to go along when two teams from the company played. "I thought it was excellent," he said, "but it also has a serious training side too because it builds leadership and team spirit and teaches people to think quickly."

He thought the game was ideal for training and motivating the company's sales teams. He also found it interesting because it brought out people's animal nature and it was those with the most cunning and creativity who won. "And that's what it's like in the jungle, isn't it?"

Collecting

March of time

TOY SOLDIERS march on. They may not be every collector's idea of a long-living investment, but the market is buoyant.

The world's most expensive set was sold by London auctioneers Phillips this year for £7,200—13 pieces of the Royal Horse Artillery the men wearing khaki and steel helmets. The original cost in 1940 was 10s 6d.

Phillips pioneered specialist auctions of toy soldiers in 1969 and sales have boomed to seven this year with even more planned for 1988. The firm's publicity consultant, Peter Johnson, and his wife Anne, are curators of the Forbes Museum of Military Miniatures in Tangier, the world's largest collection of toy soldiers recreating wars at home and abroad from the 16th century to the 20th.

Another Phillips man is consultant valuer James Opie, a member of the British Model Soldier Society for the past 22 years. Opie assesses over 50,000 toy soldiers a year, but gave up counting his own collection when it reached 20,000.

Opie specialises in the products of the Britains, who for the 74 years they made hollow-cast metal toy soldiers, were among the most prolific producers in the world. Even before 1968, when production by this method stopped, collectors were searching for discontinued models.

William Brittain (1838-1906) started in business at 28, Lambton Road, Hornsey Rise, in North London. In the early 1890s, the toy trade was precarious, so he and his sons decided to specialise in toy soldiers. For their manufacture, William Brittain, Jr, the eldest son, invented the hollow-casting process.

James Opie's excellent new book *Britains' Toy Soldiers 1893-1932* (Gollancz, £29.95), is a tribute to the firm whose reputation was for absolute accuracy in uniforms, weapons and colouring. One of their competitors once put Life Guards on brown horses.

Advice is given on how to recognise copies: "The metal of a pirated Foot Guard, probably by Hanks or Reka, is much brighter and more brittle, the actual casting thinner and lighter. The paint on an infantryman of the line is inferior, and the



movable arm is usually on the opposite shoulder, with poor modelling on packs and belts.

Check whether a girth is moulded on a horse's belly, and look at the inside of the leg if it should be fully rounded, not flat.

Albert Gamage and his celebrated store in Holborn, then one of the largest outlets for toys in the country, were the initial promoters of Britain's toy soldiers. Their 1906 catalogue read:

"We hold a stock of 500,000 soldiers of all nations, but owing to the exceptional demand at Christmas time, Customers are urged to give their orders as soon as possible."

On offer were "soldiers to shoot"—each one had the barrel of his gun bored out and a spring attached—10d for four complete with bullets, and a set of the Army Medical Service with nurses and wounded, 2s.

A presentation case of a complete company of Coldstream Guards and a squadron of Royal Horse Guards was 10s 6d.

Britain's prices in general now range from about £6 for an ordinary guardsman—so popular they were made in millions—up to thousands of pounds for a rare set of soldiers.

The Royal Horse Artillery set sold for £7,200 was in mint condition and in its original box, a factor that can add as much as £50 to a £300 set.

June Field

BRIDGE

MY FIRST example hand comes from teams-of-four:

N	E
♠ 8	♠ 5
♥ 9 7 5	♥ 10 8
♦ K J 7 2	♦ Q 9 5 3
♣ 8 4 3	♣ A 9 7 5 2
W	E
♠ J 9 4 2	♠ 10
♥ J 6 4 2	♥ Q 10 8
♦ 10 8	♦ Q 9 5 3
♣ K Q J	♣ A 9 7 5 2
S	N
♠ A K Q 10 7 5	♠ 5
♥ A 3	♥ 10 8 7
♦ 6 4	♦ A 4 3 2
♣ 10 8	♣ K J 10 8

With both sides vulnerable, South dealt and opened the bidding with two spades, North said two no trumps, and raised the opener's rebid of three spades to four spades, which became the final contract.

West started off by making King and Queen of clubs, and followed with the Knave, which was ruffed in hand. The declarer cashed Ace, King of spades, East showing out on the second round, and paused to study the position in the light of the 4-1 trump break. He then cashed the spade Queen and the diamond Ace, led a diamond, and finessed the Knave. This lost, and the contract was defeated.

In the other room South was in the same contract, and received the same lead. He ruffed the third club, as before, and drew three rounds of trumps. Then he cashed Ace and King of hearts, and ruffed a low heart, dropping the Queen on his right.

He cashed the diamond Ace, crossed to the King, and returned dummy's nine of hearts, ruffing in hand with his remaining trump, the 10. West had to follow suit, and the contract was fulfilled. West's spade Knave ruffed his partner's winning diamond.

The successful declarer tried the play—christened by me

Making All The Trumps, which, as I have said more than once, seems to be a blind spot with many players. Admittedly the heart Queen might have been a false card, but the fall of this card favours the line adopted by the declarer.

The second deal, or something like it, occurred in a par contest:

N	E
♠ 5 2	♠ 9 6 3
♥ 10 8 7	♥ K Q J
♦ 9 6 5 4	♦ A 8 7 4 3
♣ A K J 10 8	♣ K J 10 8
W	E
♠ 9 8 7 6 4	♠ A 8 7 4 3
♥ Q J 10 5	♥ A 4 3 2
♦ 5	♦ K J 10 8
♣ 3	♣ A K J 10 8
S	N
♠ A K Q 10 3	♠ 10 8 7
♥ 10 8 7	♥ A 7 2

With North-South vulnerable, South dealt and bid one spade, North replied with one no trump, and East doubled. With almost an opening two spade spades, West doubled, and all passed.

West led the heart Queen, dummy played low, and the declarer ruffed. He cashed the spade Ace, and East showed out. He drew the remaining trumps, discarding the diamond from the table, and played a diamond to the Knave. East took at once, and returned the eight of clubs. South won, cashed dummy's two diamond honours, and went one down.

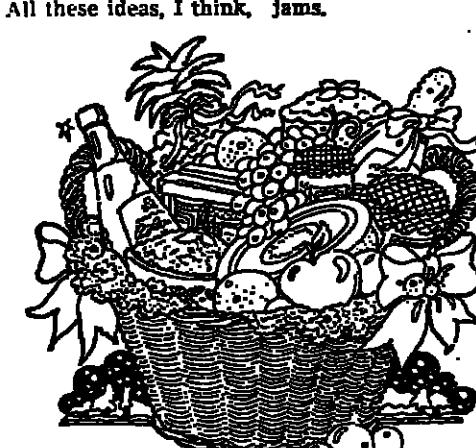
To find West with all five missing trumps was certainly unlucky, but South should have had to follow suit, and the contract was broken. When he should discard dummy's three diamond honours, and then follow with the diamond 10, he can do nothing to stop the declarer from obtaining the lead with his club Ace, and making West hold the diamond Ace, a heart return cannot prevent South from making 10 tricks.

E. P. C. Cotter

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They don't make hampers today the way they used to. Left, a wicker case with canvas cover, circa 1920, holds proper china, cutlery, ceramic containers and a copper kettle with a burner. Above, the passenger's footrest from a 1910 Rolls-Royce doubled as a hamper. From a selection of antique hampers, £300 upwards at Mansfield: 30-35, Drury Lane, London WC2

few tins (like a whole cooked ham and some John West smoked oysters) but otherwise a splendidly stocked assortment. For a friend going on a journey The Pullman Pack for Gentlemen is an expensive (£32.50) but elegant parting present; 700 grammes of Siltón and a bottle of Graham's 1978 Lettuce (a rather good one) will go to keep the wife happy.

Devon Harvest, Head Mill Trout Farm, Umberleigh, North Devon (Tel 0769 80882) packs hampers for food purists with a ready cheque book. For £165 you can have a hamper from an independent food producer, will send a selection of country produce guaranteed entirely free from preservatives, artificial colourings and additives. It sounds delectable — including, as it does, a goose, ham, cheese, a whole trout, trout bacon, honey, fudges, herbs, sausages, wine and cider.

At the very top end of the market, Bado & Colibano (rated best of all) now costs about £12.50 per litre whilst the popular San Bernardino retails at approximately £8.95 per litre.

Costly these oils may be, but delicious they certainly are, and Christmas isn't a bad time to treat yourself—and others—to this sort of indulgence.

Tuscan estate bottled extra virgin olive oil imported by Colin Price Beca of "Castell in Villa, and Fattoria dell'Ugo" are now available in London, Oxford and in many other towns. For full names and addresses of stockists, telephone 01-730 6377.

nuts. Honey in the comb.
Prettily packaged jasmine and
blackcurrant tea from Twining.
● A lovely great piece of
Parmesan cheese, or a real
good cheddar to make a cheese
from Stilton, Justin de Chan-
celor, 42 Elizabeth Street, London.
SW1 sells a particularly wonder-
ful mature cheddar.
● A good vinegar or two
(choose from Basalmic, raspberry
berry or blackcurrant, with the
last is the current "foodie" fad).
Some extra virgin oil (not
more widely available than ever
(see Philippa's update below
Small Jars or bottles (because
they do not keep well, and
opened) of walnut and hazelnut
oil.
● Some dried cepes and/or
dried chestnuts—both marvelous
ingredients for a mushroom
board. Wild rice is desperate-
ly expensive, hard to find, but
lovely treat. Orange blossom
water (use it in dried fruit
salads, or for scenting a prop-
rietary marmalade, cream or junket).
● Some tiny green lentils from
Le Puy. Crabtree & Evelyn
Passionfruit curd (an exotic
treat). Some Gentleman
relish. Rodier sardines (which

Fill a capacious log basket (£9.75 from Graham and Green, 4
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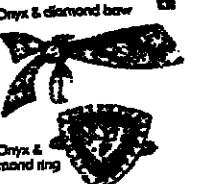
ART DECO & EDWARDIAN JEWELLERY




Crystal
crystal
diamond
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Pearl &
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Crystal & diamond
brooch




Aquamarine & diamond
earrings



Crystal &
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Ruby & diamond
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Ruby, sapphire, diamond
brooch, crystal centre



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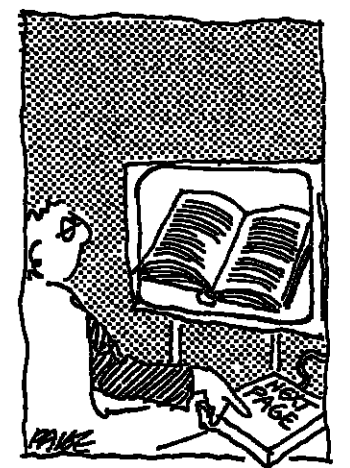
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Private view

Literacy first

SIXTY Precarious Years is the theme of the National Book League's jubilee, celebrated this week with a bookish knees-up at the Banqueting House in Whitehall, London; and it is also the title of the book written to mark the occasion. Well, there would have to be a book.

The business of the NBL has been from the beginning, is now and will be a little more luck ever shall be the promotion of books and reading, nationwide. "It should really be Reading and Books, I think. That may seem a small point, but it is im-



portant to remember what our priorities are," says Martyn Goff, NBL director since 1974. He is a tirelessly energetic campaigner on a shoe string; from man for what is at once a consumers' organisation of the book trade and a flying puppet for the education and literary services.

The NBL's Centre for Children's Books is a national treasure: a library of titles, constantly updated, with reference books and a range of nearly 60 periodicals; a world-wide repository of child-based reading, from the Beatrice Potter Society (four issues a year, subscription £4) to the Schools Poetry Review.

Apart from special exhibitions, 30 NBL touring exhibitions are presently on their way progress around the country, on hire to libraries, schools, social centres, for £20 a fortnight.

The NBL participate in national and international book symposia, fairs and festivals; co-ordinates events and competitions for the Children's Book Week sponsored by Lloyds Bank and administers more than 200

literary awards, bright and beautiful, great and small, including the Booker Prize and the Rowntree Mackintosh Smartie Prize, the most valuable children's book award.

Constantly pressed to expand its activities on a shrinking budget, it celebrates its golden jubilee beleaguered, but unbowed. Voluntary subscription — a mixture of private members, publishers, and booksellers — cannot be a very sure foundation.

Since the 1970s the NBL has received Arts Council support. On April 1 this year the grant, like many another, fell under the knife: a 25 per cent cut on public funding of £72,000. That sum had remained static for the previous three years, but it was still an important chunk of NBL income totalling £225,670 for 1984-85.

The tiny, indomitable NBL staff evidently share the view, admirably expressed by Michael Holroyd, a former chairman, that "the art of the possible is the business of literature." But at the NBL literacy comes before literature, children before adults. It is in the front line, with the schools, of a national emergency which has scarcely been acknowledged.

An estimated 6-10 per cent of the population over 16 — 2m plus, at the very least — lead lives blighted by illiteracy. HM Inspector of schools report, with increasing emphasis and alarm, that fewer and fewer children have acquired or show signs of acquiring "the reading habit." Last year only 54 per cent of all potential readers bought a book at all, of any kind.

Mr Holroyd argues, to powerfully persuasive effect, that in a world where English is ever more widely used and read, the currency of our language converts to currency in the money sense, and deserves official recognition and support.

The book trade is primarily — and properly — concerned with making a profit. In contrast, the NBL is as happy if someone borrows a book as if they buy it; using and reading count for more than commerce, and there can be no argument about that. Precariously, desperately in need of stronger trade and public support, it is having a happy birthday.

Gay Firth

John Barrett reports on tennis in Melbourne: James French, at home, looks at the English soccer scene



Defending champion Chris Evert Lloyd. She, too, had difficulties when beating Betsy Nagelsen on Melbourne's slippery court

Slippery slope to success

JOHN MCENROE was adamant. After his four sets win over South Africa's Danie Visser, the Number Two seed said "It's the worst grass court I've ever played on. It's not really tennis any more — it's kind of just fighting for survival... not only is the court hard and slippery but also you go uphill to get to the net."

You would have thought that the Lawn Tennis Association of Australia, organisers of the A\$2.2m Ford Australian Open would have been mortified to hear such condemnation of the Melbourne centre court at Mel-

bourne's historic Kooyong Stadium, the intermittent site of the Australian Championships since 1927 and its permanent home since 1952.

But there was a smile on the face of LTA executive director Colin McDonald who is already looking to the moment in January 1988 when the open will transfer to a new surface at the new A\$53m National Tennis Centre — a magnificent project, already begun, sited in Flinders Park on the banks of the Yarra River in central Melbourne alongside the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Much to the dismay of the traditionalists the surface for the 16 outdoor and 8 indoor courts cannot be natural grass because the Centre will be in constant use throughout the year as a public facility when it is not being occupied for official LTA and Victorian Tennis Association tournaments and coaching activities.

Accordingly six possible alternative surfaces will be tried next February at the City of Camberwell Tennis Centre where, last Thursday, I saw the bulldozers move in. Two surfaces will be different varieties of Omnicourt, the world's leading sand-filled synthetic grass manufacturer; two will be improved versions of existing American asphalt surfaces, Plexipave and Decorturf, one will be an outdoor Supreme carpet and one a new compacted granular rubber product called Rebound.

Brian Tobin, the LTA president is rightfully proud of achieving government support for the venture in the teeth of opposition from environmentalists and the dishevelled Kooyong who mistakenly believe that a face-lift of the existing facilities costing some A\$8m-10m could achieve the desired objective.

However, not only would the traffic density become unbearable in already overcrowded residential area but also the 5.6 hectares of the badly shaped site are insufficient to provide the necessary amenities. Naturally Kooyong will miss the A\$500,000 income which it can expect from this year's championships when first week attendances have broken records.

From the start Victoria's Prime Minister John Cain has backed the Flinders Park project which ultimately received all-party support in the state parliament. Small wonder, for the new facility will provide the most complete tennis complex in the world which will include two small show courts seating 6,000 and 3,000 respectively plus a huge 15,000 seat centre court with a sliding roof.

This amenity alone should guarantee the financial viability of the project because, sitting in with similar buildings in Sydney, Brisbane and Perth, it will provide enough incentive to the bands and pop groups for them to feel a journey to Australia will be worth while.

Last year an independent feasibility study conducted by builders Civil and Civic and accountants Peat Marwick Mitchell estimated that interest and capital would be repaid in less than 20 years. The National Tennis Centre staff will hold



More complaints from John McEnroe

the site on behalf of the Victorian Government which will fund it.

Government and LTA jointly will appoint the trustees and the governing body will manage the centre and receive a guaranteed annual sum to run the games in Australia. The LTA will also share in the profits of the year round activities once the financial servicing charges have been met.

Together with the return to a mid-January date for the Australian Open (which begins in 1987 at Kooyong) this fourth Grand Slam championship should enjoy a new lease of life from 1988. In spite of the distance I believe the players, including John McEnroe, will support the event and the clever siting of the new facility with its excellent public transport and ample parking should ensure heavy public support.

All in all Australian tennis should become revitalised.

While McEnroe was rightly complaining of the inadequate conditions of the centre court, where on Friday Boris Becker was a casualty, three British players advanced confidently on the outside courts.

John Lloyd, having beaten the No 11 seed Tomas Smid awaits either Steve Denton or Jacob Hlasek who meet today; Jo Durie, seeded 13 did as expected in beating fellow Briton Sara Gomer 6-2, 6-3 and will now play against the Czechoslovakian No 5 seed; and Anne Hobbs had her best win for months when she eliminated the left handed American No 11 seed Barbara Potter 6-4, 7-5 for the right to challenge the 1983 holder Martina Navratilova.

Rags and riches

FORTUNATELY for soccer it is easier to understand how the game is played than how it is organised in this country. The running of the sport seems to be a complicated case of divide and mislead starting at the top with the quality of the Football Association and the Football League.

There has been much musing over the past few years. Five rich and powerful clubs, Liverpool, Everton, Manchester United, Arsenal and Aston Villa, have been talking about breaking away and forming a Superleague. They are simply the wealthy, are not too cluttered by a fixture list they feel is too heavy. They say they want to improve the quality of the game. There is resentment that the decisions and decisions are influenced by inefficient, loss-making clubs.

I suspect that the unresolved battle with the BBC and the over television is a factor, and not surprisingly, money comes into it.

There is the 4 per cent levy of gates, plus the £4.25m approximately that the pools companies pay for the use of the fixtures. This is shared out, after the running costs of the league are met, and produces something of the order of £30,000 plus for each club — a real lifeline for the Halifaxes and the Hartlepoons.

One of the few people whose reputation has been enhanced by the debacle is Gordon Taylor, secretary of the Professional Footballers' Association. He is recognised as a capable negotiator, who has made a useful contribution beyond the members of the various divisions, whose future has been at stake. It would take a lot to swallow the argument that the lower strata of professional soccer should employ part-timers.

The First Division chairmen met yet again on Thursday 21 were giving little away afterwards about what was decided. Phil Carter of Everton said that the Superleague would not break up the Football League, nor was it ever the intention. He said it was largely a matter of restructuring and reorganisation. So it looks as if a 20-club First Division and a 24-club Second Division is still the favourite, though how that will be achieved is being kept a secret for the time being.

Meetings with Second Division chairmen and with Third and Fourth Division chairmen are next on the schedule.

The Second Division clubs, led by Ron Noades of Crystal Palace, have argued that the rules of the competition cannot be altered in mid-season. Indeed, if their clubs were suddenly deprived of the three promotion places to the First next season, they would have a good case. Even if it would do the lawyers far more good than football.

Some big clubs are arguing why should we be taxed on the money that results from our own investment? Mind you, the amount involved would be less than they pay one of their star players in a year or for a reserve player.

Many observers feel that to end this egalitarian shut-out would be wrong. The big clubs work hard to sign the schoolboy talent. It is argued they still need to lower divisions to produce and develop players.

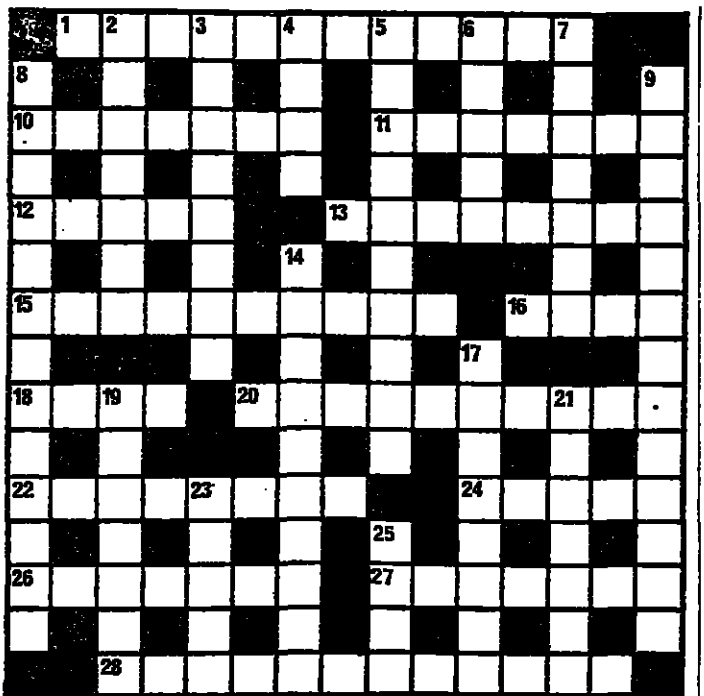
What does seem undeniable is that the First Division clubs should let the lion's share of sponsorship money when it is paid. The Marketing Board decided that there was not enough cream left in the Milk Cup, and on Thursday it was announced that Littlewoods are to be its new £2m sponsors.

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FT CROSSWORD PUZZLE No 5,887

Prizes of £10 each for the first five correct solutions opened. Solutions, to be received by next Thursday, marked Crossword on the envelope, to The Financial Times, 10 Cannon Street, London EC4A 3DF. Solution next Saturday.

- ACROSS**
- Not high time to eat and drink (9, 3)
 - Grass mowings? Message has gone all wrong (7)
 - Half a trouser? That's quite a handicap! (4, 3)
 - Point of a thorn? (5)
 - Name for most of African country that said No to the French? (8)
 - Colonial, perhaps, with right to hold forth about (10)
 - It's oddly notional, with both hands up (4, 4)
 - A harvest with a goblin in charge that's afraid of heights (10)
 - Drink time ahead? (3)
 - Piece of printing from advertiser, I fear (5)
 - Jewish name on letter with time and purpose (7)
 - Nothing to spend without brains going sideways? (7)
 - Sign of pipe or can? (5, 7)
- DOWN**
- Two horse-drawn vehicles belonging to Venus? (3, 4)
 - Hole found in these unusual descriptions (8)
 - Christmas number on railroad (4)
 - Blockage of a speaker coming up in preference (10)
 - Peace for a time, real number included (5)
 - An hundred miles per hour, ten for the Merchant (7)
 - Submarine passage for church girl turning nun — tell! (7, 6)
 - Time to drink, possibly conforming with payment (7, 6)
 - Record — French love it! — not mine, I say (10)
 - Piper the painter? (8)

Solution to Puzzle No 5,886

ACROSS: 1. Not high time to eat and drink (9, 3) — Dinner. 2. Grass mowings? Message has gone all wrong (7) — Lawn. 3. Half a trouser? That's quite a handicap! (4, 3) — Trousers. 4. Point of a thorn? (5) — Thorn. 5. Name for most of African country that said No to the French? (8) — Algeria. 6. Colonial, perhaps, with right to hold forth about (10) — Governor. 7. It's oddly notional, with both hands up (4, 4) — Gesture. 8. A harvest with a goblin in charge that's afraid of heights (10) — Harvest. 9. Drink time ahead? (3) — Head. 10. Piece of printing from advertiser, I fear (5) — Ad. 11. Jewish name on letter with time and purpose (7) — Sabbath. 12. Nothing to spend without brains going sideways? (7) — Brain. 13. Sign of pipe or can? (5, 7) — Pipe.

Solution to Puzzle No 5,887

DOWN: 1. Two horse-drawn vehicles belonging to Venus? (3, 4) — Chariots. 2. Hole found in these unusual descriptions (8) — Holes. 3. Christmas number on railroad (4) — Four. 4. Blockage of a speaker coming up in preference (10) — Block. 5. Peace for a time, real number included (5) — Five. 6. An hundred miles per hour, ten for the Merchant (7) — Ten. 7. Submarine passage for church girl turning nun — tell! (7, 6) — Nun. 8. Time to drink, possibly conforming with payment (7, 6) — Drink. 9. Record — French love it! — not mine, I say (10) — Record. 10. Piper the painter? (8) — Piper.

SATURDAY

† Indicates programme in black and white

BBC 1

8.30 am What-A-Mess. 8.35 Children Of Fire Mountain. 9.00 Saturday Superstore. 12.15 pm Grandstand including 1.10 News Summary. Football Focus with Bob Wilson. Racing from Cheltenham at 1.00, 1.30 and 2.00. Snooker (Coral International Championship): Snooker on York Hall. Rugby League (John Player Special Trophy): and at 5.00 News. 5.15 Regional programmes. 5.20 The Kwikies. 5.25 The Kwikies. 5.30 The Kwikies. 5.35 The Kwikies. 5.40 The Kwikies. 5.45 The Kwikies. 5.50 The Kwikies. 5.55 The Kwikies. 6.00 The Kwikies. 6.05 The Kwikies. 6.10 The Kwikies. 6.15 The Kwikies. 6.20 The Kwikies. 6.25 The Kwikies. 6.30 The Kwikies. 6.35 The Kwikies. 6.40 The Kwikies. 6.45 The Kwikies. 6.50 The Kwikies. 6.55 The Kwikies. 7.00 The Kwikies. 7.05 The Kwikies. 7.10 The Kwikies. 7.15 The Kwikies. 7.20 The Kwikies. 7.25 The Kwikies. 7.30 The Kwikies. 7.35 The Kwikies. 7.40 The Kwikies. 7.45 The Kwikies. 7.50 The Kwikies. 7.55 The Kwikies. 8.00 The Kwikies. 8.05 The Kwikies. 8.10 The Kwikies. 8.15 The Kwikies. 8.20 The Kwikies. 8.25 The Kwikies. 8.30 The Kwikies. 8.35 The Kwikies. 8.40 The Kwikies. 8.45 The Kwikies. 8.50 The Kwikies. 8.55 The Kwikies. 9.00 The Kwikies. 9.05 The Kwikies. 9.10 The Kwikies. 9.15 The Kwikies. 9.20 The Kwikies. 9.25 The Kwikies. 9.30 The 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